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Mr. J. Goodwin

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THE
HISTORY OF IRELAND,

FROM THE FIRST COLONIZATION OF THE COUNTRY, DOWN TO THE PERIOD OF
THE ENGLISH INVASION, COMPREHENDING THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE SCENES
OF BATTLES, AND MEMORABLE EVENTS, AS WELL AS A REVIEW
OF THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF IRISH LITERATURE
AND THE FINE ARTS.

IN ONE VOLUME.

BY GEORGE PEPPER.

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"PRAETERITORUM, MEMORIA EVENTORUM."

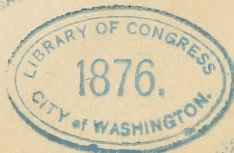
"Whate'er may be our humble lot,
By foes denounc'd—by friends forgot—
Thine is our soul—our sigh, our smile—
GEM OF THE OCEAN! LOVELY EMERALD ISLE!"

PHILLIPS.

BOSTON:
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1835.

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TO
DANIEL O'CONNELL ESQ. M.

THE VIRTUOUS, ELOQUENT, AND INCORRUPTIBLE

PATRIOT,

WHOSE ILLUSTRIOUS AND MATCHLESS SERVICES, IN THE CAUSE OF
IRELAND,

HAVE IMMEASURABLY SURPASSED THE GREATEST EFFORTS OF HIS
PREDECESSORS, OR CONTEMPORARIES :

AND WHOSE SUBLIME AND ROMAN-LIKE INTEGRITY AND DEVOTION TO
HIS BELOVED COUNTRY, SPURNED OFFERED HONORS AND

EMOLUMENTS, THIS VOLUME OF

THE HISTORY OF IRELAND,

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY HIS GRATEFUL, AND ADMIRING COUNTRYMAN,

GEORGE PEPPER.

BOSTON, JUNE 1, 1835.

INTRODUCTION.

It has often been asked by foreigners, why a country justly boasting of her poets and orators, has not produced an able historian, who can be classed with a Voltaire, a Gibbon, or a Robertson; and why the learning of an Usher, or the genius of a Swift, has left no historical monument to perpetuate the ancient glories of a nation, that in remote ages was styled, the "*Isle of learning, and the school of the west*?" We confess our inability to answer the question satisfactorily.

Perhaps the primary cause of the desideratum, in our ancient history, may be principally ascribed to the zeal of St. Patrick, who, to the eternal loss of Irish literature, caused more than 500 volumes of our records to be committed to the flames at Tara. McDermott, Lynch, and Flanagan, are of opinion that Ossian's autographs blazed in the conflagration kindled by the Christian Missionary. Another cause of the scantiness of historical materials, may be fairly traced to the vile assiduity of Danish and English invaders, to annihilate all memorials of our ancient greatness, power, and grandeur.

Still it must be confessed, that the ancient chronology of all countries, as well as that of Ireland, is extremely erroneous and uncertain. What is the boasted alleged origin of the Greeks from the gods, but the creation of poetical fancy, the chimerical mythology of Hesiod, Homer, and other Grecian fabulists?

Even in holy writ, there are the most irreconcilable anachronisms. The Septuagint and many of the fathers of the church, fix the period intervening the creation, and the vocation of Abraham, at 3513 years, whilst the Hebrews and many Christian ecclesiastics compute it but 2023! Varro, the Roman historian, finding it impossible to grope his way through the dark mazes of chronology, declared that the dates and epochs of all the events, said to have occurred before the first Olympiad, (i. e. the year after the creation, 3232,) were but the imaginary computations of fiction. We find that the Greeks began to reckon their historical eras by the Olympiads, and the Romans

distinguished theirs by the period that elapsed from the foundation of the "ETERNAL CITY." Hence we are not to wonder at the discrepancy in the chronological order of ancient Irish events, particularly those that took place before the coming of our Melesian ancestors.

The authenticity of the events enumerated in our annals, is at least as well established as that of the history of England, and the united testimony of foreign and native writers has fortified our pretension to remote antiquity, with evidence and arguments that cannot be impeached or subverted. The historic pillars that support the proud edifice of our illustrious origin, like those of Hercules, cannot be destroyed; they, (thanks to our ancient Monks,) escaped the rage of the Danes, the fury of the Henries, and the Richards; the rapacity and perfidy of the myrmidons of the sanguinary Elizabeth, and the ruthless and diabolical fanaticism of Oliver Cromwell. Some English and Scottish writers, actuated by rancorous prejudice, regard the whole of our traditional, and even our written records of early times, with a fastidious degree of incredulity. This unwarrantable scepticism, with which these writers are so incurably infected, may be justly imputed to their ignorance of the Irish language, and the consequent derision with which they treat of our historical events and circumstances; and the impotent attempt, which they make to give them a fabulous aspect. But some of their own historians have denominated Ireland, "*the venerable mother of Britain and Albany.*" These sceptical writers seem to have adopted the maxim of Voltaire, in their opinions of Irish history—"that incredulity is the source of wisdom." The philosophic Lord Bolingbroke has indeed asserted, that it is an egregious folly to endeavor to establish universal pyrrhonism, in matters of historical investigation, because there are no histories without a mixture of facts and fictions. We think, however, that there is more truth in the opinion of the splendid moralist, Dr. Johnson, who steadily maintained that all the coloring of history was imparted by the pencil of fancy. How, then, can it excite surprise, if there are defects in the chronological arrangements of Irish history, when even in the present age of literature and philosophic light, we cannot find any two accounts of the same event perfectly in accordance, in the detail of their minute circumstances and leading features? There is an anecdote related in the life of Sir Walter Raleigh, which throws a blaze of illustration on the subject. One morning, after his confinement in the Tower of London, by the order of the fanatic pedant, James I. while deeply engaged in reconciling the jarring and contrary accounts of various

historians, respecting some noted transactions that had occurred in the early ages of the world, he was annoyed and disturbed by a fray which happened in the courtyard exactly under his window. He was not able to see the transactions with his own eyes, so that he was anxious to obtain a narrative of it, from the first person that came into his apartment, who gave a circumstantial account of it, which he asserted to be correct, as he had seen, he said, the entire affair. In a few minutes after he had given his detail of the occurrence, another friend, Paul Pry-like, *dropped in*, who gave a different version of the disturbance, and just as his relation was finished, a third person entered, who asserted he was an eye-witness of the fracas, and his recital of it was as opposite and as contradistinguished as light and darkness, from the narratives of the two preceding observers. Sir Walter, astonished at the amazing discrepancy in their stories, exclaimed,—“Good God! how is it possible I can pretend to arrive at certainty, respecting events which happened 3000 years ago, when I cannot obtain a correct account of what happened under my window, only three hours since.”—Every province in Ireland had its historian, who kept its records, and every chief had his laureate and antiquarian; for so late as the usurpation of Cromwell, we find that the famous Poet, McDairy, was the Bard of the Earl of Thomond. In a country where there was much competition among poets and historians, we must be so candid as to admit, that it is probable that, in order to swell the panegyric of their chieftains and patrons, they often decked their fame and exploits in the tinsel drapery of poetic imagination. “As a question becomes more complicated and involved,” says the discriminating Doctor Hawkesworth, “and extends to a greater number of relations, disagreement of opinion will always be multiplied, not because we are irrational, but because we are finite beings, furnished with different kinds of knowledge, exerting different degrees of attention.” But though a portion of fable has been infused into our early history, yet the credit that attaches to the events connected with the landing of the Milesian colony in A. M. 2736, and the transactions and circumstances of the subsequent ages, which intervened from that epoch, until the invasion of Henry II. are authenticated by historical evidence which cannot be impeached.*

The first materials of history must have been collected from national traditions, public inscriptions, and other authorities of a similar complexion; and though the accounts delivered through the

* Vide Bede, Warner, Whitaker, Laing, Lloyde, Smith, Camden, Vallancy, &c.

medium of popular legends, should even escape the tinge and alloy of hyperbolical exaggeration, yet the person who first recorded them, flattered with the novelty of being the original historian of his country, is naturally induced to exalt their character by the embellishments of style, and the coloring of poetry, in order to cover the barren field of incident with the verdure of imagination, and people it with heroes and heroines that never had existence. Succeeding historians, finding it difficult to separate fiction from fact, or perhaps in some instances, rather obeying the impulse of their desires than the approbation of their judgment, recorded all the fabricated accounts which they received with historical fidelity.

Though the ancient annals of Rome are replete with fiction, the Roman historians have drawn no line of distinction between the true and the fabulous part. Livy, the ablest and most candid of their historical writers, has admitted that it would be a kind of heresy against the dignity of a nation, to question the authenticity of its original records: he, therefore, omitted no fact, which he found sanctioned by antiquity. He seemed to be aware that truth was so blended and interwoven with invention, that it would be an endless, perhaps an insuperable task, to separate them:—but let us give his opinion in his own words—“*Quæ ante conditam condendamve urbem poeticis magis decora fabulis, quam incorruptis rerum gestarum monumentis traduntur, ea nec affirmare nec refellere; in animo est.*”* The Milesians commenced their own immediate history with Phaenius, their great progenitor, and continued it with wonderful accuracy and fidelity, through the ages that elapsed from his time, until his remote descendants, Heber and Heremon, after the expiration of twenty-three generations, invaded Ireland, A. M. 2736. But we are not, in this introduction, to elucidate the inaccuracies of our chronology, nor could we, if we were inclined, light a torch, like our great and gifted country-woman, LADY MORGAN, to show the reader the remains of our ancient renown and glory, mouldering in the catacombs of the Irish annals. There is not now in existence, and we say it unhesitatingly, any person who could write a better history of that country, of which she is the pride and the ornament, than her Ladyship. The profundity of her research—the flowery luxuriance of her style—the fervour of her patriotism—the philosophy of her investigations—and, above all, the intimate acquaintance which she

* It is not my intention to maintain, nor yet to deny those accounts that have been transmitted to us, prior to the foundation and building of the city, as they may probably be vested in the drapery of poetic invention, rather than founded by truth on the basis of uncorrupted history, or arrayed in the modest garb of fact.

has with the language in which Ossian sung, and Brian Boroihme bade defiance to his foes, would enable her to reflect the concentrated rays of these brilliant combinations, on a HISTORY OF IRELAND, that would wither the laurel wreaths, with which the historic Muse entwined the brows of a Gibbon, a Hume, and a Henry.

It must surely have excited surprise in the minds of the inquisitive readers, that while we have numberless histories of England and Scotland, adapted to popular use, no successful attempt has been made, since the days of the Irish Livy, O'HALLORAN, to familiarize the reading world with the events of Irish history, by presenting its records in a commodious and economical form. Yet it will not be denied, that the occurrences which took place in Ireland, during the last two centuries, and especially since the accession of George III. to the present time, demand the attention of the philosopher and the historian—furnishing, as they do, moral lessons, from which not only they, but the statesmen of the world, might derive wisdom, experience, and instruction; for to form a just and impartial estimate of her present character, they must know something of her past greatness, and present degradation;—her wrongs, persecutions, and injuries, which may be pronounced as flagitious, as ever the most wicked and tyrannic oppressors inflicted on a nation, to depress her spirit, sap her moral energies, and deteriorate her inherent and indigenous virtues. The picture presented by such mercenary Irish apostates, as Dr. Thomas Leland, the Rev. Mr. Gordon, Sir Richard Musgrave, Barlow, Taylor, and the late renegade, Dr. O'Connor,* (the degenerate grand-son of the celebrated and patriotic author of the "*Dissertations on Irish History*,") who, like a parricide of his country's fame, sold all the manuscripts of his venerable grandfather, to the Duke of Buckingham, in whose sepulchral library, at Stowe, "they rot in state," is distorted in its outline by venality, and heightened in its coloring by exaggeration, so that it bears no resemblance to the original. While, however, we denounce these hired traducers of their native land, let us not withhold merited praise from the venerable Keating, the learned O'Halloran, the impartial Dr. Warner, (an Englishman) the acute O'Flaherty, the erudite Bishop Usher, the sympathetic and intelligent Curry, the eloquent Lawless, the zealous Taafe, the accomplished McDermott, the classic Dalton, and "though last not least," the elegant and efficient vindicator of the aspersed Irish, Mr. Plowden, whose history

* See Plowden's historical letter to Columbanus, and McDermott of Coolovin's statement in relation to these manuscripts.

of Ireland, in all the great historical essentials, is superior to any similar production extant. All these historians have contributed materially to illuminate the *antique* darkness of our annals; but their works do not embrace those topics, which the ample materials in our hands will enable us to introduce in our HISTORY.

The American readers, who may honor this history with a perusal, will be astonished at the record of our discords and civil warfare in feudal times. But we must inform them that martial glory was the goal of the ancient Irish warrior's ambition:—for him the sweets of peace and domestic happiness, had no charms or allurements. The inspiring songs of the bards, and the siren voice of anticipated military fame, hurried him to the field of combat, where distinction and renown could only be obtained, and the laurels of celebrity gathered. The chieftain was sure of being branded with degradation, who would loiter in the soft lap of luxury and inglorious pleasure. To be generously brave, is surely no proof of savage barbarity; and that such was the chivalric bravery of the Milesian Irish, will appear evident, when history assures us, that none of our monarchs ever survived the misfortune of a defeat in battle, except Malachy II. who fled from the glorious conflict of Clontarfe. Let us peruse the history of the Romans, and it will exhibit a scene of eternal warfare, in which dissension and civil broils are perpetually mingled with foreign conquests. The Grecian states carried the glory of arms to the highest pitch of ambition, at the same time that they termed all other nations barbarians. Athens and Sparta wasted their strength in destroying each other, and yet they were considered the most elegant and polished people in the Grecian Republics; nor was the soul-moving Demosthenes deemed a barbarian, when he, by his animating harangues, excited his countrymen to arms, and with—

“ ————— Resistless eloquence,
Wielded, at will, the fierce democracy;
Shook the arsenal, and fulminated over Greece—
To Macedon—and Artaxerxes' throne!”

It is, therefore, evident, that wars and civil commotions are no proofs of a deficiency of refinement of manners, or enlightenment of civilization, and however derogatory they may be to the precepts of religion, and the injunctions of morality, they still exhibit a theatre where all the higher powers of the mind are called into action—where the victor is disarmed of his enmity, by the pleadings of compassion, and the fortunate conquerer laments over the fallen foe.

But perhaps we have already extended this introduction to pro-

lixity ; but we must of necessity carry it a little farther in order to define our plan. We are aware of the important task we have assigned ourself, and of the difficulty that will attend the writing of a comprehensive HISTORY OF IRELAND. We have indeed an abundance of materials, which we hope by industry and assiduity, to arrange with historical skill, and to combine information and instruction in our work, which will furnish a succinct narrative of all the memorable events that occurred in Ireland from the arrival of Partholanus, down to the present year. Nothing shall be omitted that deserves to be remembered. In relating the merits and demerits of memorable actions, we shall endeavor to trace them to the motives from which they originated—to elevate such as were consecrated by laudable intention, to their just eminence of moral celebrity, and to stamp such as sprang from the source of turpitude, with the stigma of reprobation. We will bring the cotemporary authority of English and Scottish writers to our aid, in dissipating the mists of prejudice, in which some of their countrymen obscured our fair fame and character. We shall let Americans see what Erin *once was*, for what she is, alas ! is known to the world. She has been the victim of English calumny, and it is generally in that deceitful mirror of misrepresentation, that she is even now reflected in America. We shall do all we can to subvert the baseless system of English and Scottish defamation—and to defend the ancient historic structure of Ireland, which we contemplate with the inalienable sympathies of hereditary affection, from the assaults of prejudice and incredulity.

We will give a fair, and we hope, an impartial history of Ireland ; though candor obliges us to confess, that when we come to detail the wrongs and persecutions of our native land, we cannot help speaking with warmth ; for he that would merit the title of quite an impartial historian, should, like Imlac's Poet, divest himself of all the passions, feelings, and prejudices of his age and country.

In our history we shall give a luminous review of the literature, manners, and customs of the Irish people, embracing an inquiry into the merits of their genius, eloquence, valor, and characteristics, as well as specimens of the forensic and senatorial displays of Grattan, Curran, Burke, Sheridan, Burgh, Flood, O'Connell, Plunket, Sheil and Phillips.



CHAPTER I.

An Inquiry into the causes from whence Ireland derived the various names by which she has been distinguished in ancient times; the reason to which she owes the origin of her present appellation. The arrival of the first Colony in Ireland, under the command of PARTHOLANUS, of Migdonia, in Greece. The Rivers and Lakes found in the Island, by this Scythian Colony, with remarks on them.

NAME. In proceeding to give a History of Ireland, we think that we cannot take a preliminary step in our arduous undertaking, more conducive to facilitate our progress, than to give a compendious relation of the various names by which Ireland was distinguished in our ancient annals, and in the writings of Grecian and Roman poets and historians.

The noblest purpose to which history can be applied, is to extend our acquaintance with the human character, and to give free exercise to our judgment on human affairs. In deducing the History of Ireland from its first colonization, and tracing the foundation of our nation back to its remote origin, it is necessary that we should adduce every historical evidence that can strengthen the basis on which the proud edifice of our high pretension to illustrious antiquity rears its elevated towers. There are few, in this age of light and literature, who will conform to David Hume's favorite doctrine, "that nations should not push their researches too far into the exploits and adventures of their ancestors," which he thinks, "should be suffered to remain in oblivion."

Convinced, as we are, that the early period of our history presents traits of character, examples of valor and virtue, and monuments of genius, which the annals of Greece or Rome, in the most refined and enlightened ages of their triumph, can scarcely parallel, we shall expatiate with unwearied pleasure on the glory and grandeur that distinguished Ireland under her illustrious Monarchs, during those centuries of her greatness and renown, that preceded the disastrous epoch, which stands accursed in Erin's calendar, THE INVASION of HENRY II., in 1172.

But let us proceed to enumerate the different names by which the land of Bards and Orators was known in the "olden time." The first name, according to Bishop Hutchinson and Raymond, bestowed upon Ireland, was "*Inis Ealga*," in honor of Ealga, the wife of Partholan, the great founder of our nation. This was the appellation of Ireland until the country was invaded by the *Tuatha de Danans*, whose chief called it EIRE, after his lady; hence ERIN. The descendants of this colony, in process of time, changed the name of the country to *Innisfail*, from an enchanted stone, said to be part of Jacob's pillar, which they brought to Ireland. This continued to be the name of the nation until the Milesians subverted the dominion of the Danans, and gave Ireland the nomenclature of the Queen of Milesius—"SCOTIA." A great discrepancy of opinion prevails amongst our most learned writers, on the etymology of HIBERNIA. Bishop Usher and Raymond agree in deriving this name from the

river Iberius, in Spain, whence the Milesians came to Ireland; while Ledwich and Harris contend that the term is borrowed from a Greek compound word, which signifies *a western country*. Doctor Keating seems inclined to impute the origin of the title *Hibernia*, to Heber, the son of Milesius, one of the first of our Milesian monarchs.

The learned Bochart's conjecture on this disputed question assumes a great air of probability: "*Hibernia*," says he, plainly seems Phœnician; for this term, by some called *Ierne*, is no more than *Ibernæ*, or, the furthest habitation westward." Sir James Ware concurs in this hypothesis. Cæsar, Pliny, and Tacitus called Ireland by the name of *Hibernia*, "which means," says Camden, "the most remote country of Europe, westward." Strabo talks of *Hibernia*, as a woody country in the Atlantic Ocean.

But let us inquire whence the derivative of the present name of our country—Ireland. Camden cites Orpheus, the poet of Thrace, as an author who gives the most ancient and decisive testimony of the name of Ireland; he says, the son of Apollo calls it *Ierna*, and our learned countryman, Bishop Usher, exultingly observes, that, "the Roman people were not able to produce so ancient a witness of their name." We think, with Dr. Keating, that the etymological origin of the term *Ireland*, may be traced back to *Ir*, one of the sons of Milesius, who was buried at Colp, near Drogheda: the place of his sepulture was called the *land of Ir*, from which, in process of time, the whole Island received the general name of *Irlandia*, signifying, in the Irish language, the country of Ire's grave. Sir William Temple is of opinion, that the name *Ireland* is derived from the river *Ierne*. Plutarch calls Ireland *Ogygia*, which signifies "*the most ancient Isle*." Some of our ancient historians have marshalled a host of arguments, tending to prove that Ireland was the Isle of Calypso. Eminent Roman writers have called Ireland, *Juverna*. But it is time that we should conduct our readers out of the barren field of etymology and conjecture, into the spacious region of historical narrative.

ARRIVAL OF PARTHOLANUS. Although creditable annalists have asserted, that Ireland was first peopled by the nephews of Noah, immediately after the flood, our learned antiquarians discard the story as the fiction of the Bards. But all our historians have impressed the seal of authenticity on the following record of the first colonization of Ireland.

According to the concurrent testimony of the annals of Erin, Partholanus, the son of Seara, the son of Sru, the son of Easru, the son of Framant, the son of Fathocda, the son of Magog, the son of Japhet, the son of Noah, was compelled to fly from his country, Migdonia, in Greece, to evade the punishment with which justice threatened to visit him, for the murder of his parents, and his attempt to assassinate his brother, in order that he might reach the goal of his ambition, the supreme command. In his flight to the coast, where ships were prepared by his adherents, to transport him from the scenes of his guilt, he was accompanied by his wife *Alga* or *Elga*, his three sons, Rughraidhe, Slaighe, and Laughline, with their three

wives, together with one thousand soldiers, who volunteered to share in his fortunes. Having been fortunate enough to surmount the perils of a long and tedious voyage, he at length reached the coasts of Ireland, wafted thither, more probably, by the caprice of winds, or the sport of tempests, than by any previous knowledge which he had of the geographical situation of the Island, or the skill of his mariners in navigation. Our annals tell us, that he effected a landing in Derry, which he and his followers then called *Inbher Sceine*. This memorable event, according to the "*Book of Invasions*," occurred in the year of the world 1956, three hundred years after the flood. Mr. O'Flaherty, in his *Ogygia*, fixes, on the authority of *Clitan Mac Noisk*, the date of the arrival of Partholanus, in 1969, a difference, however, of little consequence in matters of such remote antiquity. The most incredible story recorded by the Partholanians, is, that on their arrival there were but three lakes and nine rivers in Ireland; but that before the death of Partholanus, a period of thirty years after his arrival, seven more new lakes burst forth, and three rivers gushed from the mountains of Ulster.* Doctor O'Halloran conjectures that the lakes and rivers discovered by Partholanus, were those in that part of the country first occupied by the colony; but as the woods were cut down, and cultivation extended, the new lakes and rivers, which the people discovered in the forests, were recorded in the national annals at the precise time of their discovery. Be this as it may, the accuracy with which they are mentioned, sufficiently evinces the scrupulous regard that our early writers paid to those minute circumstances which composed the detail of their simple story. There is no history extant, should be less alloyed with the dross of fiction than that of Ireland; because it is a fact attested by writers of unquestionable veracity, that the *national annals* were always preserved in the archives of the state. O'Flaherty, Lynch, and Colgan, agree in stating that the government employed the chief Bards of the nation, to correct the national records before the assembled states, at TARA, so that the stream of genuine history might run down pure and pellucid to posterity. "The productions of the annalists," says the acute and erudite WARNER, "were to undergo the solemn test and sanction of the great council of the nation, in a triennial parliament or convention, where such accounts only as were deemed worthy of credit, were

* The following are the principal
Lakes in Ireland.

Killarney,	county of Kerry.
Allen,	" Leitrim.*
Allua,	" Cork.
Arrow,	" Sligo.
Conn,	" Mayo.
Corrib,	" Galway.
Derg,	" Donegal.
Erne,	" Fermanagh.
Derg,	" Tipperary.
Esk,	" Donegal.
Foyle,	" Derry.
Gara & Gill,	" Sligo.
Gougenabarra,	Cork.

Gule,	county of Antrim.
Inchiquin,	" Clare.
Inny,	" Westmeath.
Kay,	" Leitrim.
Lane,	" Westmeath.
Laughline,	" Westmeath.
Macknean,	" Cavan.
Mask,	Armagh & Down.
Neagh,	" Derry & Antrim.
Ramor,	" Cavan.
Salt,	" Donegal.
Seuddy & Shillin,	Westmeath.
Shealing & Carr,	Meath.
Strangford,	" Down.
Swilly,	" Donegal.

approved, and a memorial of them entered into the register of that high court. If any authors were found perverting the truth or imprudently prostituting it, in order to serve the purposes of a party; misrepresenting unfortunate or defeated virtue, contracting or concealing undoubted facts, with the same perverse intention of prejudicing fallen patriots, who had no other than historical evidence for their vindication, in such cases the authors were degraded, and made liable to the penalties inflicted by a law against occasional and incendiary historians. Surely this ordinance of the ancient Irish legislatures, gives a great idea of the wisdom of this people, and an authenticity to their history, which is to be given, I believe, to no other nation under the sun." That all the volumes of our ancient history, which ST. PATRICK, in the enthusiasm of his zeal for Christianity, committed to the flames at Tara, A. D. 440, were the pure and unmixed essence of TRUTH, there can be no question.

But it is time to return from this digression, to the Lakes of the Partholanians. Doctor Hutchinson, late Bishop of Down and Connor, in his defence of Irish historians, has taken much pains to defend this part of our history, and maintains with a strong bulwark of argument and ingenious reasoning, the probable truth of the accounts transmitted to us of these lakes and rivers, "which are," he says, "so far from discrediting the authenticity of our annals, that they not only afford strong proofs of the reality of the facts, but that those who recorded them were wise men, who wrote them for the instruction of posterity, that they might know which way nature moved. The most eminent Geographers tell us of more and greater new lakes than these, which have covered the low lands in many other countries." The Doctor confirms this observation by many instances; and indeed it does not seem difficult to conceive that if even in our own times, the harmony of nature is often disturbed, and her laws interrupted, and this harmony must have been much more liable to tumultuary emotions, at so early a period after the flood, when the earth was convulsed to its very centre, and the equipoise of the Globe consequently vacillating.

Partholanus, we are told, suspected the fidelity of his wife, who is represented, by some writers, to have been a woman of extreme beauty, which led him to confine her supposed gallant, (one of his officers,) in a cave. The reign of Partholanus is not represented to us marked by any memorable events. This is what might naturally be expected from the settlement of a few adventurers; and if our annals have thrown a shade of importance over it, they would have been more liable to suspicion. Indeed we find an account, not at all authenticated, in M'Dermott's history of Ireland, which states that, "An African Colony resided in the Island, previous to the arrival of Partholanus, who lived by fishing and hunting. They were under the command of Ciocal, the son of Nin, the son of Garbh, the son of Nadhmoiar. A desperate and decisive engagement is stated to have taken place between them and Partholanus, soon after his arrival, at a place called *Muigh Jotha*, where Ciocal, the son of Nin, and the greater part of his followers were destroyed. Doctor Warner and O'Halloran regard the story of the African Colony as

the dream of poetic fiction. The Partholarians cut down all the woods, and extended tillage and pasturage over the whole Island.

Partholanus reigned thirty years, and at his death left his kingdom to four sons, who were born in Ireland, Er or *Ire*, Orba, Fearn, and Fergna; the three sons whom he brought from Greece having died since his arrival. Slainge died in the thirteenth year of his reign, and was interred in the side of a mountain, in the county of Down, from him denominated Sliabh Slainge, or the mountain of Slainge. Two years after, Laughline died, and from the circumstance of his being buried in the vicinity of a Lake in West Meath it received the name of Loch-Laughline. In the 25th year of his reign, Rughraidhe was drowned in a lake, in the County of Sligo. The scrupulous attention which our annals have paid to the names of places, is a strong and conclusive testimony of their truth.

The simplicity of such statements can never be reconciled to the spirit of romance and fiction. To describe so many men, observes Warner, "to point out their manners, to paint their persons, to relate their adventures, and make a circumstantial recital of their families, seems beyond the power of fiction." In the hyperbolical narrative of the imagination, nothing but the marvellous can please: nothing but great and perilous disasters, the revolutions of power, the ruin of empires; the rapid strides of conquest; the feats of chivalry, and the brilliant execution of the steel clad warrior; in a word, nothing but what is glorious in its design, and grand in its progress, like the splendid career of a Napoleon, can be admitted into the fanciful creation of the legendary romancer. In all the statements respecting the colony of Partholanus we perceive nothing but what is suited to real life, and to the origin of an infant Colony, totally unacquainted with civil and political transactions. There are no reports whatever, in these early records, that are belied by the circumstances of time and place. Human nature appears in her native dress, or more properly without any dress, such as she appears in countries secluded from the polish and adventitious modification of artificial society; and yet an *Innis*, a *Hume*, a *Mac Pherson*, and our own apostate *Ledwich*, have had the unblushing effrontery to assert, that the accounts of Partholanus have been invented by our Bards and Monks, to gratify the "*pride of ancestry and national honor*." Our history furnishes a "plain unvarnished tale," unadorned by that affectation of "*national vanity and high born ancestry*," to which *Innis*, in his "*critical essay, on the ancient Inhabitants of North Britain*," ascribes our high pretensions to "*illustrious antiquity*." But when we carry this history to the age of *Ossian*, we will endeavor to answer the objections of cavilling critics. The Monks, who are supposed to have fabricated our annals, would have found it extremely easy to exalt the character of Partholanus, the Romulus of Ireland, by uniting in his person all those conspicuous and ennobling qualities that emanate from heroism—from bravery, magnanimity, and God-like virtue; all the varied excellencies of the son of Venus and Anchises might have been easily conferred upon him, and the national pride thus flattered by the high endowments of an imaginary hero. But instead of this we

find him described as an infamous parricide, a wretch, who not content with spilling the blood of his parents, attempted to deepen the enormity of his remorseless turpitude, by sacrificing his brother's life on the diabolical altar of Fratricide. Surely if the Monks coined this story, in the mint of invention, we are sorry, for the honor of our early ancestors, that it has obtained such historical currency.

The sovereignty, as we have already observed, was transmitted, at the death of Partholanus, to his four sons—Ire ruled over the north east part of the kingdom; his southern limits extended to Dublin. Orba's dominion comprehended the country from Dublin to the Isle of Barrymore in Munster; Fearn had sway from Barrymore to Galway; and Feargus' possessions included the range of territory that lies from thence to the northern extremity of Ulster. Partholanus had, also, ten legitimate daughters, to whom, on their marriage with distinguished chiefs, lands were appropriated. We had almost omitted to mention, that when Partholanus landed in Ireland, he had, in his retinue, four learned men, one Poet Laureate, two Druids, and a sculptor. The Partholans governed Ireland for three hundred years, at the end of which period a dreadful plague broke out which proved fatal to almost the entire of the colony. The Psalter of Cashel says that the contagion was peculiarly destructive at Ben-heder, (now Howth,) near Dublin, so much so that Howth was the burial place of some thousands of the Partholans, who perished by the sweeping mortality, from which circumstance, says the book of conquests, it was ever after called *Taimhleacht Muintir Phartholan*, or the cemetery of the race of Partholan. In the sixth century, St. Fenton erected a church in Howth, dedicated to St. Mary, which was in good preservation until the reign of Elizabeth, when it was plundered and destroyed, by her sacrilegious and sanguinary myrmidons. Howth, though now stripped of trees, was, we are informed by history, formerly covered with venerable oaks, which shaded a Druidical temple, as the remains of such an edifice are still to be seen in one of its sequestered valleys.

Before closing this chapter we should, perhaps observe, that some antiquarians have gravely asserted, that the Partholans were not the first who discovered Ireland. This honor they gave to Adhna, the son of Beatha, a messenger sent by Nion the son of Pelus, to ascertain the quality of the Irish soil. On reaching the Island, he found it clothed with the most luxuriant verdure, and brought back to his master a bunch of the rank grass, which he had plucked, as a proof of its fertility.

CHAPTER II.

The arrival of a second colony from Greece, under the command of NEMEDIUS, in Ireland. The Africans and infant Colony contend in several battles, for the dominion of the country; the Nemeditans are finally defeated, and compelled to retire to Greece.

A. M. 2286. KEATING and O'FLAHERTY concur in relating that all the Partholanians were annihilated by the destructive plague which we mentioned in the last chapter, and that in consequence, the country lay waste and desolate for thirty years, until it was visited by a horde of African pirates, who took up their residence in it, and erected fortifications along the coast to protect them from the descent of other predatory rovers.

Nemedius, who, we are told, was descended from *Adhla*, an infant son, whom Partholanus left after him in Greece, prepared in the Euxine sea, a fleet with which he determined to follow the fortunes of his ancestors in Ireland. The motive that induced him to quit his native land, and fit out this expedition, is not recorded in our annals. This armament was very formidable; it consisted of thirty-four ships, each of which was manned by thirty marines. He landed on the coast of Ulster, (but where, we are not informed,) without opposition from the Africans. Besides his wife Macha, he brought to Ireland his four sons, Starn, Iarbhanal, the prophet Feargus, and Ainnin.

Having established himself in the country without molestation from his African rivals, he selected a beautiful valley, where the city of Armagh now stands, in which he prepared to build two palaces* for himself and his retinue. Four African architects, who it seems had made a greater progress in the arts than his Grecian followers, were employed in the erection of these palaces, which they finished with such exquisite skill and elegance as excited the admiration of Nemedius; but whether from ignoble feelings of envy, caused by those artists having surpassed the Grecians, in genius and execution, or from the apprehension that these accomplished architects might raise other edifices, exceeding his in magnificence and style, he had the baseness to order them to be assassinated.

Soon after the Court of Nemedius was removed to the new palaces, MACHA, the wife of this Chief, died, and from the mound of earth that was raised, as a monument over her grave, Armagh derives its name; *Ardmacha*, signifying in Irish, *Macha's eminence*. Nemedius, while at peace with the Africans, made great improvements in Ireland; several wilds were cultivated, and twelve forests were cut down. At this juncture, if we can credit Keating, four

* These Palaces were, General Vallancy supposes, the first structures of stone erected in Ireland. The Palace of Tara was built by Heremon, the first of our Milesian Kings, in A. M. 2737. Its order of architecture was Ionic, and the marble of its colonnade was brought from Italy. The Palace of Emania, in the county of Armagh, the hereditary seat of the illustrious O'Neils, was the next structure in magnificence and beauty, to Tara. It was erected by Crombkaoth O'Neil, monarch of Ireland, A. M. 3539.

large lakes sprung up suddenly, and overflowed a great extent of the country. The Africans looked with a jealous eye on the progress of the Nemedians, in their rapid acquisition of territory. A pretext for coming to an open rupture was soon seized upon by both parties. Hostilities were quickly commenced between them, and they engaged fiercely in three successive battles, in which the Africans were vanquished, and three of their principal leaders slain. The Nemedians, flushed with victory, resolved to drive the whole African race out of the Island. The Africans, aware of the resolution of their enemies, bravely determined to contend for the game of empire with desperate valour. Intrenching themselves in an advantageous position, they waited the attack of the Nemedians, to which they opposed a gallant resistance, that dismayed and deterred their assailants. Nemedius, exasperated at this formidable front, put himself at the head of his best troops, made an impetuous assault on the enemy's centre, but without effect; the Africans now rushed forward on their foes, who began to give ground, and the conflict became general; the engagement lasted many hours, both parties fighting with desperation, but at length fortune favored the Africans. Nemedius was totally defeated, and his army almost annihilated. Two of his sons, Starn and Ainnin, fell in the sanguinary battle. The fatal result of this conflict broke the spirit and blasted the hopes of Nemedius, nor did he long survive the disaster, for exhausted with grief and disappointment, he died at *Arda Neimhid*, now the Isle of Barrymore, in the county of Cork.

The Africans determined to avenge the different losses which they had sustained, on the shattered remains of the Nemedians, imposed a heavy tax on them, which was to be paid on the first of November, at a place called *Mag Gceidne* or the plain of violence. But the chief of the Nemedians rendered indignant by the enormity of this exaction, conspired with others, to shake off the odious yoke of despotism, and make one bold and vigorous effort to regain liberty and independence.

The Chieftains of the Nemedians at this time, were Fathach, the son of Nemedius, his brother Feargus, and Beothach, their nephew, noble spirits, of daring, fortitude, and chivalric bravery. They soon marshalled a force, with which they attacked their oppressors, and the success that crowned their arms was such as might be expected from the union of resolution and courage, animating men that fought for victory or death. In this irresistible assault, Conning, the African General, two of his sons, and the greater part of his army fell by the edge of the sword, and many of his fortified garrisons surrendered to the conquerors. But scarcely had the Nemedians enjoyed a momentary triumph under the laurels of victory, ere new dangers darkened the transient brightness of their exultation. More, the son of Dal, a powerful naval commander, who was abroad on an expedition for some time, returned with his fleet, at the moment his countrymen were preparing to evacuate Ireland.

When the Africans perceived the approach of the fleet, hope banished despair, while the Nemedians hastened to the shore of Tor Inis, to oppose the landing of More and his forces, conscious that

if they failed in obstructing the landing of this chief and his hosts, their dominion in Ireland was lost. More's ships not being able to come near enough to the shore of Donegal, he caused his soldiers to descend into the waves in order to encounter the Nemedians, who boldly advanced through the water to attack their foes. The engagement was so fierce and obstinate, so prolonged and terrible, that both armies were unconscious of the swelling tide, that raised its waves to their middle, till they were borne away by the current, so that those who escaped the sword were drowned.

In this conflict the entire army of the Nemedians, except thirty officers and three commanders, perished. The African chief, with a few soldiers regained his shipping, and then with the wreck of his forces, took possession of the country.

The forlorn remains of the Nemedians were now reduced to the necessity of submitting to whatever terms their African masters thought proper to dictate, or to seek their fortune in other climes; to the latter alternative they almost unanimously inclined. They prepared a fleet as soon as possible, and under the command of Simon Breac, the grand son of Nemedius, set sail for Greece, the country of their fathers, where, on their arrival, they met but a cold and unkind reception from their relatives, who, instead of alleviating their misfortunes, spurned them with contempt and scorn. Another grandson of Nemedius', Briotan Maol, with his followers, landed in the north of Scotland, and there settled, and his posterity, for many ages, were possessors of the country, as well as England, as far as Bristol. The Psalter of Cashel confers upon this Nemedian chief, the honor of giving name to Britain, which before was called the "Great Island."

This etymology is sanctioned by a great number of our antiquarians, and is certainly entitled to more credit than the fable of Geoffrey of Monmouth, who wished to derive the term Britain from Brutus, the Trojan, a claim so unfounded as to be rejected even by his own countrymen.

The few Nemedians who remained in Ireland, were subjected to every hardship and privation, by their cruel task masters, the Africans, until the Fir-bolgs invaded the Island. The period of time that elapsed, according to Keating and Lynch, from the colonization of Nemedius to the landing of the Belgae, was 217 years, though O'Flaherty, through mistake, assigns a rule of 216 years to the Nemedians, in Ireland. Dr. O'Halloran, with his usual penetration, satisfactorily proves the anachronism of the author of Ogygia.

CHAPTER III.

Arrival of the Belgæ or Fir-bolgs in Ireland. The reason why they were called by that appellation explained. Division of Ireland betwixt the five chiefs of the invaders.

A. M. 2503. IN the conclusion of the last chapter, we stated that the fugitive Nemedians, under *Simeon Breac*, were treated as aliens by their relatives, in Greece, who subjected them to the most intolerable hardships, compelling them, like the captive Israelites, in Egypt, to hew wood and draw water. Their task masters exhausted ingenuity to devise the most toilsome and operose occupations for the strangers; for they were obliged to sink pits, and carry clay from the valleys, in leathern bags, to the summits of rocks and mountains to form an artificial soil. From this circumstance they derived the name of "*Fir-bolgs*," or bagmen. We should mention, however, that two of our antiquarians, Raymond and Smith, ascribe the appellation to a different etymology; these writers say, that after the invasion of Ireland by the *Fir-bolgs*, they took up their residence in caves, with which they *burrowed* the whole country; hence these Troglodytes were called *Firl-bogs*, or creeping men.*

* Among the innumerable Caves in Ireland, the following are celebrated for their structure and extent:—

BRIDE CAVE, about six miles from Cork, is remarkable for its structure, and various compartments. One chamber, in which are the remains of a Druidical altar, is very spacious. Its arched roof is supported by massy lime-stone pillars, so highly polished that they seem the work of art, though Grose and Ware allege that they are the formation of nature. In some places the entrance is very low, but after you descend, the arch suddenly rises to an elevation of ten feet, the concave of which is as smooth as if it had been the work of art.

CON-A-GLOUR, near Cappoquin, in the county of Waterford, is a large open cave, into which you descend by stairs formed by the shelving declivities of rocks. The first chamber you enter is about thirty feet square, through which a subterraneous rivulet is seen running in a natural aqueduct, through the solid rock. This Irish *Arethusa* sinks under ground at Ballynacourty, and proceeding for a mile through this cave, rises again in a gushing fountain, at a place called Knockane. In some of the chambers the stalactical matter, descending from the roof, presents a variety of forms, both fantastic and picturesque.

BALLY CASSIDY. This famous cavern is near Enniskillen, in the county of Fermanagh. The dome, covering the pillared portico of this cave, rises to the elevation of twenty-five feet; and the different chambers of the interior are spacious, and adorned with Tuscan columns of lime-stone.

DUNLUCE. This cave is situated under the Castle of Dunluce, near Bushmills, in the county of Antrim, of which we will speak in the course of our topography.

DUNMORE, near the city of Kilkenny, is a cavern that is daily visited by travellers. The passage into it, is down a square aperture, or rather precipice, upwards of sixty feet deep, by twelve feet wide; at the bottom thereof is the mouth of the cave, which is but low, arched with rocks, seemingly dropping on the head, when from a number of petrifications, like icicles, there falls a vast quantity of limpid drops of crystal. After you wander through this cavern for a quarter of a mile, you hear the hoarse murmuring of a subterraneous river which rolling over ponderous stones, and falling down ledges of rocks, produces a strange kind of noise in the hollow cavities.

GRANGE. This cavern which is in the vicinity of Drogheda, has been celebrated in the writings of several travellers. It is a vaulted cave in the form of a cross, with a gallery leading to it, eight feet long. On the first discovery of this cave in

In an edition of Dr. Francis Molloy's Irish Grammar, published in 1676, which has just been put into our hand, we find that Raymond and Smith have borrowed their ideas of the Fir-bolgs from the illustrations of that learned divine, on the *ogum* of the Brehons. But we will not pursue any further, an inquiry which cannot lead to a result of any material importance.

The Nemedians, groaning under the pressure of persecution and injustice, formed, after the lapse of years of suffering and cruelty, the resolution of bursting the bonds of their slavery in Greece, and of quitting a country where they never were to enjoy the charms of ease or happiness. So well did they manage their conspiracy, that they collected 5000 followers, with whom they embarked on board of a large Grecian fleet, which they had seized, before their oppressors had the remotest suspicion of their intention. After a long and perilous voyage, the first division of the fleet, under the orders of Slainge, effected a landing in the bay of Wexford, which in honor of this chief was called by our annalists *Inbher slainge*; the second division, of which Gann and Seangann were Commanders, effected a landing on the coast of Donegal; and the third with the chieftains Geannann and Rughraidhe reached the shores of the county of Mayo, near Killala, in a destitute state. These five chiefs, after uniting their forces, agreed to parcel out the country into five divisions, among them. Slainge being the eldest brother, assumed the sovereignty of Ireland, though his portion of the division only comprehended Leinster; the two Munsters fell to the share of Gann and Seangann, and Ulster became the dominion of Rughraidhe, while the government of Connaught was assigned to Geannann. Slainge, to whom our historians give the title of the first monarch of Ireland,

1318, a gold coin of the Emperor Valentinian, was found in it, which General Vallancy and Dr. Llhwyd observe, might bespeak it to denote it a Druidical monument of the early ages. We think it was a place of interment of some ancient Irish chief.

ST. PATRICK'S PURGATORY. This cavern is a narrow cell in one of the Islands in Lough Derg, in the county of Fermanagh, famous for being hewn by St. Patrick out of a solid rock, as a place of penance, and prayer, in which the holy man often confined himself.

SKEHEEWRINKY, in the counties of Cork and Tipperary, situated between Cahir and Mitchell's town, is one of the most magnificent caves in Ireland. The opening to it is a cleft of rock in a lime stone hill, so narrow that it is difficult to get into it. You descend by a ladder of thirty steps, and then reach a vaulted apartment of a hundred feet long, and sixty high. A small aperture on the left leads from this, in a winding course of not less than half a mile exhibiting a variety of rocky altars, columns, spires and architectural ruins, resembling a fallen city. In some places the immense cavity of the rock is so extensive, that when well lighted by torches, it assumes the appearance of a vaulted cathedral divided into pillared aisles, and furnished with many altars. The walls, ceiling, and floor seem enriched with the finest embellishments of art, as the curious incrustations that adhere to them, appear as dazzling as if they were powdered with diamonds, and enamelled with crystal. The columns of spar are extremely brilliant and shaped into every order of architecture, and adorned with volutes, and fancy foliage of icicles, which possess 'a grace beyond the reach of art.' One branch of the cave extending in a northern direction, is in some places extremely narrow and low, but it widens abruptly into a large hall, in which the rocks form an amphitheatre, through whose area a stream meanders. We will have occasion to speak of this cave again.

was passionately fond of music, in which according to Molloy and Colgan, he was an eminent proficient, particularly on the harp. It was this Prince say O'Geohagan and O'Flaherty, that first bore the harp as the national emblem, on his royal banner. It appears that his short reign of one year was distinguished by no memorable event. Keating and Lynch trace his genealogy up to Japhet. This Prince was succeeded by his brother Rughruidhe, who after a reign of two years was drowned in the Boyne near Drogheda; and having no issue his throne and sceptre devolved to Gann, who after a reign of two years, was succeeded by his brother Geannann, whom death soon plucked from his throne to make room for Seangann, who after a reign of five years, was murdered by his nephew and successor, Fiacha Cinnfionnan, or white-haired, the grand son of Rughruidhe. The usurper did not long enjoy his ill-gotten power, for he was assassinated by his cousin Radhnall, the son of Geannan, who was saluted as monarch. This monarch was scarcely seated on his throne, when his title was disputed by *Fiodhbghean*, the son of Seangann, whose standard was joined by numerous malecontents, with whom he marched to *Craoibhe* where the royal army was encamped. A fierce battle quickly took place, in which the king was slain, and his forces cut to pieces. The crown was not long suffered to remain on the brows of the victor, for Eochaidh, the heir of Radhnall, fomented a rebellion, the result of which was the death of *Fiodhbghean* and the total discomfiture of his army, at the engagement of *Muirtheimne*,* in the County of Louth.

Our historians represent Eochaidh as a prince that united the matured wisdom of the statesman, to the heroic valor of the general, consequently his reign was more brilliant and fortunate than that of any of the Belgian monarchs. He was a friend to literature and the arts; and the laws he enacted were fraught with a spirit of justice and equity which commanded at once reverence and obedience. We are told that he was married to Tailte, daughter of the king of Spain, the place of whose interment, in Leinster, still retains the name of *Tailtean*.

He fell in the tenth year of his reign, in an engagement with Virgiodlamed, king of the Tuatha de Danans, at a place called Muige Tuirride. His death terminated the Belgian power in Ireland, which, according to the testimony of Keating and O'Halloran, lasted thirty-seven years. O'Flaherty however, who is certainly one of the most accurate of our chronologists, maintains with a strong force of argument, that the dominion of the Belgians existed eighty years, from their first invasion of the Island until its subversion by the Damnonii, whose history shall be the subject of the next chapter.

* Now Mallacrew about five miles north of the town of Ardee.

CHAPTER IV.

Invasion of Ireland by the Damnonii, or Tuatha de Danans. Their migration from Greece. History of the Liagh-Fail, or stone of destiny. Of the reigns of Breas, Nuadh, Luigha, &c. Objections of Ledwich, Mac Pherson, O'Connor, and Warner, answered.

A. M. 2541. EOCHAIDH having, as we stated in the last chapter, raised his power to the highest pinnacle of grandeur, believed himself secure from foreign or domestic foes; but the unexpected invasion of the Damnonii soon dissolved the delusion of his dream of regal happiness, and convinced him that the stability of royal authority is not always immoveable on its slippery foundation. The invaders landed in the tenth year of the reign of this monarch, under the command of NUADH, a direct descendant of Nemedius. This Prince and his soldiers distinguished themselves in Greece by their martial exploits.

TUATHA DE DANANS. Our annalists inform us, that these invaders were designated "*Tuatha de Danans*," to denote their descent from Iobhath, the son of the Princess Danan, the daughter of Dealboith, of the royal dynasty of Nemedius. Other antiquarians derive this name from the magical power which the Damnonii possessed, and exercised in so astonishing a manner, in Bœotia and at Athens. Warner and O'Connor deduce the origin of their appellation from the fact of the colony being divided into three tribes; the first of which, consisting of the chieftains and nobles, were called *Tuatha*; the second *Dei*, which signifies gods, as they were the Priests and Druids who officiated at their sacrifices and religious rites; the third class, the *Danans*, ranked in their numbers the Bards, who sung the exploits of their heroes, and the hymns of their sacred ceremonies.

Some of the Nemedians, who, as we before related, were expelled from Ireland by the Africans, settled themselves, with their chief, Beothach, near Thebes, where they acquired great fame for their skill and potency in magic, in which we are told they were so profoundly versed as to raise, by their necromantic power, the dead to life. They continued at Thebes, where they increased prodigiously, until the country was subjected to the sway of the Assyrians, when they removed to Athens, and became the auxiliaries of the Athenians in their wars with the invaders. The enchantments they are said to have wrought at Athens are only, in our opinion, the creation of poetic fiction, and therefore too marvellous to obtain historical credence from us. Finding their magical spells rendered ineffectual by the counter charms of the Assyrian Druids, they hastily quitted a country where their credit and influence were rapidly sinking in public opinion. Accordingly they committed themselves, once more, to the guidance of fortune, and after several wanderings and adventures through "field and flood," they arrived, at length, in Norway, where it is said they were hospitably received by the inhabitants, who being an illiterate people, entertained feelings of respect for the

strangers, whom they admired for their learning, as well as skill in necromancy. They appointed four cities for their habitation, where they erected schools for the instruction of the youth of the nation. These cities were named Falias, Goreas, Finnia, and Murias. Here they diffused the blessings of instruction and the lights of education. Our records do not say how long the Damnonii remained in their new habitations: but whether disgusted with the climate, or with the unpolished manners of the people, or what seems more probable, disturbed by the jealousy and envy of the natives, they determined to seek out some new land of promise. Enlisting themselves under the banner of NUADH, they migrated to Denmark; but finding the aspect of the country unpleasing, they sailed thence to Scotland, where they landed, and resided for seven years. The occurrences of their stay in Scotland have not been committed to the historic page.

These erratic people becoming discontented in Scotland, set out again in quest of another country, and succeeded, after a short voyage, in reaching the northern coast of Ireland. The luxuriance of the verdure, and the vivid greenness of the grass that mantled the hills and valleys of Erin, proclaimed the fertility of the soil, and convinced the strangers that here cultivation and industry would afford them all the necessaries of life. NUADH, after landing, by the advice of his principal officers, caused his entire fleet to be burned, so that all hopes of retreating from the Isle should be thus cut off, and that the valor and courage of his followers should be their only remaining refuge from the opposition which they might experience from the natives.

Having arranged themselves in martial array, they commenced their march into the interior of the country, under the covert of a thick mist, which they raised by enchantment, to screen them from the observation of the inhabitants. After the lapse of three days, while it is said this magic mist continued, they reached the northern frontier of Leinster, where, concentrating their forces in a strong position, they then resolved to send heralds to Eochaidh, requiring of him to resign his crown to their chief, or meet them in the field of battle.

The monarch, indignant at the insolence of this daring message, sent by a band of wandering adventurers, accepted the challenge without hesitation. Placing himself at the head of his troops he soon reached the camp of the invaders, where an engagement, as obstinate as it was sanguinary, ensued. Both armies fought with desperate valor and implacable fierceness, for many hours; but at length, notwithstanding the gallantry displayed by the Belgians, victory declared itself for the invaders, and the brave Eochaidh and ten thousand of his soldiers fell in the conflict. In this battle Nuadh lost a hand, but the wound was healed by the skill of his physician, Miach, and a silver hand exactly fitted to the stump by Credah, his goldsmith, whence he derived the appellation of Airgiottlamb, which signifies, in Irish, the silver-handed.

The conqueror, after this victory, assumed the sovereign authority, and acted very arbitrarily towards the defeated Belgians, whom he

compelled to exile themselves to foreign countries. Many of these Belgians found refuge in the Isles of Arran, Man, and the Hebrides.

The Damnonii are said to have brought four monuments of great antiquity with them into Ireland. The first was a block of marble, called, "*liagh-fail*," or, the stone of destiny, to which they attached great value, as one of their prophets had predicted, that a prince of their race should reign wherever it should be preserved; consequently it was used for many ages in Ireland in the coronation chair of our monarchs, until Fergus the great, the son of Earca, and brother of the Irish monarch, Morough, subdued Scotland, and ascended its throne, in A. D. 430, when, to give greater pomp and solemnity to his coronation, he entreated his brother to favor him with the loan of it. This sacred relic of antiquity was accordingly sent over to Scotland, where it remained preserved in the Abbey of Scone, until Edward I. carried it off, with the other regalia of the Scottish crown, and placed it in Westminster Abbey, where it has been employed in its original use, at the coronation of George IV. as well as that of most of the Kings that preceded him since the reign of Edward I.

The Druids consulted this sacred stone on all momentous occasions, and its divinations were as religiously believed as were those of the oracle of Delphi. Many wonderful miracles have been imputed to the *Liagh-Fail*. It had the singular property of emitting a sound resembling thunder, when any of the true line of the Scythian or Milesian Princes was crowned upon it. The statue of Memnon, we are told, possessed a similar power of uttering a sound when it received the first rays of the rising sun. Whenever an illegitimate prince, whose mother had been faithless to the King's bed, was seated on the "*fatal stone*," it issued no sound, so that it served as a talisman to preserve the chastity of the Irish Queens, as well as an ordeal test of the purity of the Milesian blood. But the coming of the Messiah, which abolished all the Pagan superstitions, deprived this oracular stone of all its virtues, as it never was known to emit a sound after the birth of Christ. Many of our antiquarians have written disquisitions on the Stone of Destiny, and entered into the recesses of historical research, to bring forth testimony of its being actually part of Jacob's pillar. Indeed Bishop Usher says, "that whether the extraordinary attributes which the *Liagh-Fail* was supposed to possess, were the invention of the crafty Druids, or the real donation of enchantment, cannot be now ascertained; but the prophecy of that singular medium of augury, is every day fulfilled by the reign of the present royal family of England, who are lineally descended from the Milesian monarchs of Ireland." Doctor Warner, who, except Plowden, did us more justice in his history than any other Englishman, observes, in relation to the fatal stone, "that the coronation of the Kings of England over this wonderful stone, seems to confirm its title to the *Stone of Destiny*; but it reflects no great honor on the learning or understanding of the nation to retain a remnant of such ridiculous Pagan superstition in so important and solemn an act." With regard to these sentiments of Dr. Warner, it may be observed, that it will always be the interest of the chief

rulers not to disturb the opinions that have once gained popular credit, unless they tend to subvert some moral or religious principle; for in that case, they may sap the very columns that support the grand edifice of social order, and destroy the basis on which laws and government are founded. So great, indeed, is the influence which opinion has over the destinies of a people, and so much are they subject to its sway, that Pascal, in his *Provincial Letters*, calls it the "*Queen of the world*"—*la Reine du Monde*. The Trojans defied the assaults of the Greeks, as long as they possessed the Palladium; and the Romans were invincible, while they continued to believe that their city was to be eternal. *Possunt quia posse videntur*. "Mahomet," says Mennais, the learned and acute author of the *Essay on Religious Indifference*, "persuaded a few Arabians that their swords were to subject the whole world to the Alcoran, and in less than a century the Turkish Empire was established, from the banks of the Euphrates to those of the Nile. Cato did not so much fear the introduction of the Grecian philosophy into Rome, only because he foresaw, that by teaching the Romans to dispute about every thing, they would end in believing nothing. His fears were completely justified by the event." The new philosophy triumphed over the resistance of the laws, the wisdom of the senate, and the destinies of the eternal city itself. A few reveries, armed with doubts, accomplished what the forces of the entire world were unable to effect; as the snows of Russia effected the dissolution of Napoleon's invincibility, what Europe, in arms, essayed in vain to achieve.

From these examples, nothing can be more obvious, than that the art of governing the people effectually, is the art of chaining their belief to the pillars of OPINION, and alarming their fears, by raising before them the phantoms of superstition. Of this the Pagan legislators were so sensible, that they made it one of the first maxims of their policy.

It is evident, then, that though, as Dr. Warner says, "it reflects no great honor on the understanding of the nation," to attach any credit to this superstitious practice, yet the retaining of it, on the other hand, argues no want of sound policy in those who are invested with the executive and legislative authority in England. Consequently, if the people are weak enough to believe that the crown will be perpetuated in the present royal family while they are crowned on this stone, it is certainly the interest, as well as the wisdom of the government, to strengthen the bonds of delusion which fetter popular prejudice, and deepen the gloom of credulity that darken its optics. But we have wandered too far into reflection on the "*fatal stone*," from which Ireland got the name of "*Innis Fail*."

The second instrument of enchantment which belonged to the Damnonii, was a sword of exquisite temper and workmanship; and the third a gleaming spear, so polished and bright, that some of our Bards have denominated it the "*Meteor of Death*." This famous spear was used in battle by several Irish Kings.

The fourth magical implement, as the *Book of Invasions* represents, was a Caldron, of singular construction and properties.

That the ancients cultivated necromancy and astrology, in an extraordinary degree, is a fact attested by the evidence of authentic history ; but in all probability, their magic was nothing but a more extended acquaintance with the arts and sciences, and a knowledge by which many movements can be put in operation on natural and philosophical principles ; and things effected by mechanical power, that appear strange and surprising to the ignorant. This species of magic is practised at the present day as much as in ancient times, by every juggler, though it has ceased to excite our surprise by its apparent opposition to the general laws of nature, because we know it is founded on an application of a power supplied by natural philosophy.

If Electricity and Galvanism were known to the Irish Druids, the people would reverence them as Gods, who could kindle the fire of heaven on earth, and reanimate the bodies of the dead. We make these observations merely to blunt the edge of that ridicule to which the supposed magic of our Danan ancestors might expose the authenticity of the annals that record it. The Danans might be conversant with many of those feats, which excite admiration for ingenuity and expertness in enlightened minds, rather than the astonishment which only springs from the conviction of the intervention of supernatural agency. In those days of remote antiquity, the beacons of philosophy and literature did not blaze so splendidly in human intellect, as they do now. But to resume our narrative ; NUADH having secured by the decisive defeat of the Belgians, the entire sovereignty of the Island, imagined himself inaccessible to the attacks of fortune or the pretensions of rivals ; but this confidence was not well founded. After the lapse of some years, his cousin, BREAS, who acted as Regent of the kingdom during the period which the King's hand was healing, now became a pretender to the crown, and succeeded in collecting an army from among the exiled Belgians, and the alien Africans, to sustain his claim. An engagement soon took place at Muigh-Tuirreadh near the lake of Arrow, in county of Mayo ; the conflict, as usual in a civil war, was sustained with animosity and intrepidity on both sides.

BREAS himself, as well as the chiefs of the Belgian and African auxiliaries, fell on one side, while the monarch Nuadh, and the most distinguished leaders among the royal army, fell on the other. The victory, however, was gained by the gallant Danans, who instantly raised the nephew of their fallen King, LUIGHA LAIMHFHEADHA, to the vacant throne. It was this Prince that instituted the famous "*Aonach Taitean*," or military games, ordained in honor of Tailte, the daughter of Magh More, King of Spain, and widow of Eochaidh, the last king of the *Fir-bolgs*. After the death of her royal husband, she married *Deocha Gharbh*, one of the Danan chiefs, and was entrusted with the education of the young Prince Luigha, who in gratitude for the care and tenderness he experienced from her, instituted these Olympic games to commemorate her name. The celebration of these games, at which the beauty and chivalry of Ireland assembled, commenced on the first of August, the anniversary of the Queen's death, and continued fourteen days after. From this

celebration the first of August is called in Irish "*lah Lughnansa*," or the day of King Lughaidh. This King, after a prosperous reign of forty years, died full of years, and honor, and was interred at Uisneach, in the county of West Meath.

To his diadem succeeded DAGHAIDH, of whom our annals record that he reigned Monarch of Ireland nearly eighty years. Dr. Keating bestows the appellation of *Great* on this king, without telling us whether his virtues or his valor entitled him to that distinction.

The next Prince of this line, who ascended the throne, was DEALCHAOIDTH, who after a reign of ten years, undistinguished by any military exploit, was assassinated by his own son FIACHA. The vile parricide, however, did not long enjoy that power for which he waded through the blood of his parent, as he was slain in the battle of Ard Breace by Eogan of *Inbar-more*. His death made way for the three last Princes of the *Tuatha Danan* dynasty, MAC CUIL, MAC CEATH, and MAC GREINE, who reigned a year alternately, for the period of thirty years. They received these names from the respective Deities that became the object of their adoration. *Mac Cuil* worshipped a log of wood. *Mac Ceath* bent the knee of homage before a plough-share; but *Mac Greine* elevated his thoughts to a more sublime object, and adored the sun, which until the introduction of Christianity was revered as the chief Deity of the Irish. In process of time, *Mac Greine*, (which signifies the son of the sun,) became sole Monarch of Ireland, and was in the meridian of power, when the Milesians invaded the Island in 2736, and established a sovereignty, which lasted 2400 years! In the preceding history of the four first colonies that settled in Ireland, we have strictly adhered to our ancient annals, in deriving the Partholarians from Fathocda, the son of Magog, and in making the Nemeditians, Belgians and Damnonii, descendants of the Partholarians. The learned Dr. O'Halloran has devoted three chapters of his history to substantiate and fix this origin of our nation on an immoveable foundation of historical proof. But opposed to his bulwark of logical deduction and deep research, are arrayed the powerful arguments of the late CHARLES O'CONNOR, the lucid reasoning of O'Geoghegan, and the philosophical inquiries of DR. WARNER.

Amidst the contention of these giants of literature, we find our little bark adrift in the whirlpool of Scylla and Charybdis, for—

"Who can be right when Doctors disagree?"

One party argues that every country received its inhabitants from that immediately contiguous to it; that Asia Minor was consequently inhabited by the posterity of Japhet before Greece; Greece before Italy; Italy before Gaul; Gaul before Britain, and Britain before Ireland. This opinion is, no doubt, very powerfully enforced by Charles O'Connor in his dissertations. Dr. Warner, evidently borrowing the tinge of his notions from the profound author of the dissertations, asserts "that the little knowledge of navigation in those early ages, would not admit of longer voyages; and we may assure ourselves, that the poetical relations bringing some of them from

remote regions, and speaking of their performing various exploits, are nothing else but the humor so common in those days, of swelling the original of nations, with the heroic and the marvellous." We admit, with pride, as an Irishman, the genius that shines in the writings of Charles O'Connor, nor can any one admire more than we do the good sense and impartiality that pervade the dissertations, particularly when we reflect that they are the production of an accomplished writer, who was himself the representative and lineal descendant of **RODERICK O'CONNOR**, the last of our Milesian monarchs; but though we entertain this respect not only for the writer, but also for his opinions, yet we deem it a duty of the first importance in every historian, to judge for himself on all controverted points of history, and examine minutely and deliberately, the cogency of that erudite antiquarian's opinion, before we subscribe to it, no matter how dazzling it may be with the glitter of sophistry, and the spangled drapery of imposing argument. If we believe the authorities that inform us of Ireland's being first peopled by Partholanus and his posterity, after by Nemedius and his colony, next by the Fir-bolgs, and lastly by the Danans; why reject the very same authorities, when they tell us the countries whence these colonies emigrated into Ireland? If we reject the latter, why not reject the former account, as they have both exactly the same claim to our assent? With regard to the historic narrative of the first four colonies of our country, we shall observe, that if it is the fictitious story of an Irish Bard, the inventor has displayed a greater versatility of talent, exhibited a wider field of imagination, and a more enlarged acquaintance with the diversity of the human character, in the happy faculty of describing so many chieftains and generals, in assigning to each "a local habitation and a name," without betraying the least appearance of monotonous sameness or similitude, in the assemblage of personages, or the qualities which he has attributed to them, than the most fanciful and creative of our poets, from Shakspeare to the sublime Byron. All the historical characters are drawn from life; they are various and dissimilar in individuality, feature and aspect. They are all distinguished by those traits that belong to the soldier; but every soldier is himself, and no other; their respective characters are peculiarly their own, and no one can suspect them to be the common offspring of the same production. To produce such an infinite diversity of historic characters, is perhaps, more than human genius could accomplish. It would, therefore, be absurd to suppose, that the fabricator of the Irish annals, could ever have sketched all the different characters that are introduced into the preceding part of our history.

As to the futile objections of the Inneses, the Macphersons, and the Ledwiches, they have been scattered into "thin air," and submerged in the surges of oblivion by Bishop Usher, M'Dermott, Harold, and the most overwhelming of all, **LADY MORGAN**; so that it would be like warring with phantoms for us to notice them. To Mr. O'Connor, we would say, that the ancients had the Ark for a model, and even if they had not, the bare floating of timber would have pointed out the facility of removing by water from one place to

another. The Indians of this country used canoes, rudely shaped, which they rowed with singular dexterity, before they were visited by Columbus, or became acquainted with European navigation.

Josephus, who had better opportunities of knowing how the world was peopled by the posterity of Noah, than we can pretend to, informs us, that they passed by sea to many places. Who that has read history, is not aware of the Phœnician commerce, and the mighty fleets of Sesostriis, King of Egypt, who lived, according to Du Fresnoy's chronology, 626 years after the flood, and consequently only three centuries after the arrival of Partholanus in Ireland? Have we not the authority of creditable writers to assert, that he undertook and accomplished long and dangerous voyages? He doubled the cape of Good Hope, after sailing through the straits of Babelmandel, from the Arabian Gulf to India, returning through the strait and the Mediterranean sea. Why then are we to doubt that shorter excursions were made by water three centuries earlier?

Moses tells us, that by the posterity of Japhet "the Isles of the Gentiles were divided in their lands, every one after his tongue and nation." Now the Isles of the Gentiles are universally admitted to be European isles; and if they received their inhabitants from Asia so early as the days of Phaleg, when the dispersion recorded by Moses took place, why might not Ireland receive her settlers from Greece, so much nearer home, 200 years later; for Phaleg was born 101 years after the flood, in whose days the confusion of tongues, and the dispersion of mankind occurred at Babel?

These are the reasons which have induced us to cling so tenaciously to our old historical monuments, because were we to give them up, we would abandon that vantage ground, on which our writers have achieved such signal victories over Scotch pretenders, and English bigots. But we do not presume to direct the judgment of the reader; the historian's duty is to detail, not to dictate.

Our pages shall be open for such objections as may be brought, in decorous discussion, against any opinion we may advance in the course of this history. We are not of the nature of the sensitive plant, ready to shrink from the most delicate touch; like the Irish oak, we can brave the tempest when it assails us.

CHAPTER V.

The origin of the Milesians or Scots traced to Phœnius. An account of his successors ; and their migrations, until they invaded Ireland, A. M. 2736.

WE come now to treat of an epoch of Irish history, which has been, more than any other in our annals, illustrated and attested by a combination of genius and historical testimony that establishes its basis on a rock of irrefragable accuracy, which can no more be shaken by the cavils of doubt and scepticism, than the pyramids of Egypt by the idle blast of the Sirocco. In this era the horizon of our history was overcast by no fictitious clouds ; letters and light were introduced into Ireland by our Milesian ancestors, and TRUTH was the deity they worshipped.

Our Scythian origin has not been even questioned by INNES or Macpherson, in all their visionary essays to despoil Erin of the unfading garlands which her Fingals, (*Fion Mac Cumhal*), Ossians, and Columbas entwined round her brows. For Buchannon himself says, “ the Scythians becoming too numerous in Spain, many of them forsook that country and settled in Ireland, which they called *Scota*, in honor of the wife of Milesius, their chief.”

Phœnius, who, next to Cadmus of Phœnicia, is most eminent for the invention of letters, was the great progenitor of the Milesian line. He was the descendant of Magog the son of Japhet, the son of Noah. We have scriptural authority for saying that Japhet had seven sons, whose posterity peopled not only Europe, but part of Asia. The descendants of Gomer inhabited Gaul and Germany ; those of Magog occupied Scythia, which they rendered so renowned for martial glory. Madai and Juvan settled in the different provinces of Greece. Thubal, who was the inventor of the Jewish harp, possessed Spain and Portugal. Messech, Italy. And Thyras obtained the sovereignty of Thrace. Of the children of Magog, the great progenitor of the Scythian nation, the inspired pensman has given us no account ; but all our chronicles, particularly those that are deemed most authentic, as the Book of Invasions, the White Book, called *Leabar-Dhroma-Sneachta*, and the Book of Conquests, concur in the assertion that he had three sons, *Baath*, *Jobath* and *Fathochta* ; from Baath descended Feniusa Farsa, king of Scythia, who was the founder of the Gadelians. Jobath was the ancestor of the Bactrians, Parthians, and Amazons. Fathochta was the progenitor of Partholanus, and consequently of the Nemedians, Fir-bolgs, and Tuatha de Danans, as well as of the Goths and Huns.

Our Ethiric historians commence their annals of our Scythian origin with Phœnius, the son of Baath, the great source whence flows the Milesian stream. Our antiquarians say that Phœnius got the name of Saisde, or the sage, from his knowledge of philosophy, and his intimate acquaintance with the different languages that originated from the confusion of tongues at Babel. He also gained immortality by inventing eight letters of the alphabet, in addition to the sixteen signs of Cadmus. Possessing sovereign authority in

Phœnicia, he selected seventy-two learned men whom he dispersed to the different countres that were then inhabited, to learn the language that prevailed in each, commanding them to return at the expiration of seven years. When that period was elapsed, these literary missionaries came back to the court of Phœnius, with minds enriched and elevated with foreign lore. Schools were founded by the Prince, for these linguists to impart a portion of their acquired knowledge to their countrymen.

But no sooner were these schools opened than Phœnius discovered that the memory of the teachers was not sufficiently tenacious of the principles they had studied in their respective peregrinations, so that the necessity of fixing on some arbitrary characters to impress the recollection, and represent the original elementary sounds of the human voice, forcibly suggested itself. To attain so desirable an end, his first object was to ascertain the number of these primary sounds that enter into the composition of words; and to effect this he judged it expedient to add eight letters or signs to the alphabet of Cadmus. He is said to have been assisted in this invention by Gadel and Gar, two Hebrew philosophers of erudition. The Irish appellation for our mother tongue was "*Teanga Pheni*," or the language of Phœnius. This Alphabet served to record the transactions of history, philosophy, and science; but the sacred mysteries of religion were registered in a character which was only understood by the Druids or high priests. Raymond, in a long dissertation, satisfactorily proves that the occult letters or signs used by the Phœnician priesthood, were in formation and identity, the same characters, in which the Irish Brehons preserved their records. Before paper or parchment was invented, the ancient Irish Druids caused the sacred signs to be cut on tablets of marble, and sometimes inscribed with a red hot iron on smoothed boards of the beech tree. Several of these Druidical records are still to be seen in the museum of Trinity College, Dublin. Ware, Camden, and the Welsh antiquarian, *Llhwyl*, have adduced insurmountable arguments and logical deductions to support the fact alleged by our historians, that the use of the Phœnician alphabet was coeval with the landing of the Milesians in Ireland.

"The Phœnician and Irish languages," says *Llhwyl*, "are similar in meaning, and generally in orthography; so much so, indeed, that they agree as much together as any one of the Greek dialects doth with another, and more exactly, in fact, than the languages of two remote parts of the same kingdom." But it is time to turn to Phœnius.

This Prince, thirsting after new knowledge, committed the care of the kingdom to his eldest son, NEANIUL, and setting out on his travels, he visited several seminaries, in order to increase the acquisition of his accomplishments. After a long peregrination, he took up his residence in the vicinity of Babylon, where he opened a school and gave instructions to several Egyptians, for according to Herodotus, the youth of Egypt in those days derived all their knowledge of letters, geometry and architecture from the Babylonians. Leaving this seminary under the supeintendence of compe-

tent preceptors, he returned to his kingdom with the view of promoting a general system of education throughout all his dominions; but shortly after his return he was arrested in his laudable career by the hand of death.

NEANIUL took the reigns of government, and his brother Niul (the remote progenitor of the royal dynasty of O'Neil,) was appointed to the office of high priest. His legislative wisdom and literary attainments spread his fame over Europe and Asia. Pharaoh Cingress, king of Egypt, hearing of the celebrity of this paragon of learning, became so extremely anxious to see him that he sent ambassadors to invite the erudite Prince to his court. Flattered by the invitation, he repaired to Egypt, attended by a gorgeous retinue. At the court of Pharaoh the graces of his person and the insinuation of his manners captivated the heart of the Egyptian princess, Scotsa, while the display of his talents prepossessed the king and courtiers in his favor. A matrimonial alliance was soon solemnized, and Niul received possession of the territory of Capacirunt, on the borders of the Red Sea, as the dowry of his wife. The issue of this union was a son, whom Niul named GADEL, in honor of his father's preceptor, who had borne the same name.

Keating and O'Flaherty entertain us with a historical *detail* of the intimacy of Moses and Niul, which, from the silence of other creditable writers, we think we may more properly call it a *tale* of Romance. CORMOC, the royal historian, nor St. Fiech, the Biographer of St. Patrick, makes no mention of the connexion of Moses and Niul, though each of these authors state that Ireland was anciently called *Tuatha Phæni*, or the Island of Phænians.

Indeed, King Cormoc in his Psalter, instead of synchronizing the Jewish Prophet and the Phœnician Prince, informs us, that between the period of the Gadelians quitting Egypt, and that of the deluge, 470 years had elapsed, whereas the era of Moses' departure from captivity, is fixed by the most accurate chronologists 160 years later than that of the birth of Gadel-glas. But as the story has been interwoven in our early annals, we have no right to tear the threads of interpolation out of the historic web. Sir Isaac Newton mentions, somewhere, "that if the alloy of fiction could be separated from the pure ore of fact, many ponderous folio volumes, assuming the name of history, might be committed to the flames, without any loss to the republic of letters." But let us give our version of the story, and embody its substance in our own language.

It was during the residence of Niul, at Capacirunt, adjoining the Red sea, that the Israelites, under the command of Moses and Aaron, attempted to free themselves from their Egyptian bondage, and in the course of their march they encamped near the house of the Prince, who surprised at their number and hostile appearance, went in person to know who they were, and whether they came in peace or war. On his approaching the camp he met Aaron, who gave him a brief detail of the Hebrew nation, and the bondage to which they had been so long subjected in the land of plagues. He then related the wonders and miracles that God had wrought for their deliverance, and the punishments which he inflicted on

their unrelenting oppressor. Niul moved and affected by the relation of the holy man, proffered him his assistance, and offered to supply him with corn, and such other necessities as his country produced. Aaron, after giving a feeling expression to his gratitude, returned to his brother, and joyfully informed him of his interview with a neighboring Prince, and the kind offers of assistance that he so generously made. Moses elated at the intelligence, communicated it to the assembled hosts, to whose bosoms it imparted the vivid beams of hope. It happened on the same night, that the young Prince GADEL, was bit in the neck by a serpent, while bathing in the river. The virulent venom quickly diffused itself through his veins, and poisoned the currents of life, so that he was soon reduced to the last extremity. Niul, alarmed at this fatal accident, and aware of the miraculous powers with which Moses was gifted, carried the expiring Prince to his camp, and entreated that he would extend to his son the healing effects of those attributes with which the supreme Being had invested him. Moses touched with pity for the tortures of the child, instantly complied with the request of the afflicted parent, and laying his wand on the wound, the young Prince immediately recovered. As soon as the cure was performed, Moses locked a chain, which he held in his hand, round the neck of Gadel, whence he received the name of *Glas*, or of the lock. Moses then predicted, that wherever any of the posterity of *Gadel-glas* should reign, no venomous reptiles should ever infest the country, or be able to live on the soil on which they would once imprint their footsteps. Niul overjoyed at the recovery of his son, and the promise of the prophecy, cheerfully furnished Moses with such provisions as were necessary to his journey, not however, without apprehensions that his civility to the Israelites might arouse the jealousy, and draw down the vengeance of his father-in-law upon his devoted head. As soon as he imparted these fears to Moses, he solicited Niul either to remove with him into the land of promise, where he should enjoy a part of the possessions destined for the Hebrews, or if this did not seem a pleasing alternative, he promised to deliver up the Egyptian shipping into his hands, by which means he and his people could keep aloof until he saw how God should settle affairs between him and Pharaoh, who was making preparations to pursue the children of Israel, in order to bring them back to bondage. The latter proposition having been accepted by Niul, Moses instantly despatched a thousand men to secure the Egyptian fleet, who succeeded in their design of putting Niul in the possession of it. He lost no time in embarking with all his followers, and standing out to sea to await the event of Moses' flight from the tyranny of Pharaoh. Next day, according to holy writ, the waters of the red sea were divided, and the Egyptian Monarch, in attempting to follow Moses, perished with all his hosts, by which memorable event, the fears of Niul being dissipated, he returned to his former possessions, and reigned in peace for many years. When our intelligent readers peruse the foregoing ingenious fictions, they will allow, that like the episode narrating the meeting of Dido and Æneas, they serve to decorate with the flowers of romance and story, which the

weight of its glaring anacronism must sink in the quagmire of utter discredit.

What credulity can be persuaded that Moses could send a thousand men to seize on the Egyptian fleet, while Pharaoh with all his forces, was in actual pursuit of him? Dr. Keating endeavors to account for the imaginary alliance of Moses and Niul, by supposing that the latter, like many of the characters in scripture, lived some hundred of years; but a hypothesis is a bad ground-work on which to raise a fabric of historical fact.

Those who reject the preceding story, which has indeed no claim to historical credence, derive the word *Glas*, the surname of Gadel, from the brightness and brilliant polish of his arms, which reflected a green lustre. From this *Gadel-Glas* the Milesians received the appellation of *Gadelians*, and from his Mother, *Scota*, that of *Scots*. The etymology of these names, and also of the name Phœnicians, given to our Milesian ancestors, is confirmed by the following ancient verse—

“ *Phæm o’ Phæmus robearta : brig gan dochta
Gaoidheal O’ Gaoidhul-Glas-garta . scut’o Scota.*”

That is, we are unquestionably called Phœnicians from our renowned progenitor, Phœnius; Gadelians from Gadel-Glas, and Scots from Scota.

Gadel succeeded his father Niul, A. M. 1996, and seems to have enjoyed a peaceable reign. It was, indeed, too short to witness many revolutions. His son *Easru* assumed regal authority; but his reign, which it is said lasted thirty years, is not distinguished in history. He died in 2036 of the world, and left a son named *Sru*, who succeeded to the throne. At this era, the sovereignty of Egypt was swayed by *Pharaoh an Tuir*, whom our historians represent as a brave and accomplished Prince. He recruited the forces of his kingdom, and exerted himself to repair the ravages with which the divine wrath devastated the country during the reign of his wicked predecessor, Pharaoh Cingress.

This Monarch, either not knowing the descendants of Niul, or according to some authorities, incensed at the assistance which the Gadelians afforded Moses in his flight from the Egyptians, entered the country of Capacirunt with fire and sword.

Sru, unable to cope with so formidable an opponent, found no other resource of safety from the danger by which he was menaced, but in flying into the country of his ancestors. This flight took place, according to O’Halloran, A. M. 2046. The irruption of Pharaoh was, however, so rapid and unexpected, that *Sru* could only collect four ships, in which he embarked, with the principal nobility, their wives, and such valuable effects as they could carry with them in so precipitous an embarkation. This event occurred in the tenth year of *Sru*’s reign. Sir Francis Walsingham, in a latin work, published in 1563, called *Hypodigma*, alludes to the flight of *Sru* out of Egypt in the following passage, which we translate—“After Pharaoh Cingress and all his bands perished in the Red sea, his successor *Pharaoh an Tuir*, burning with resentment against a noble

Scythian who resided in Egypt, and who was a blood relation of the former reigning family, whom Pharaoh dreaded as a rival in the monarchy. He therefore resolved to drive this competitor out of Egypt, lest he might attempt to seize the government. The Scythian Prince not having the means of asserting his right to the crown of Egypt, fled to Spain, and thence to Ireland." This account, however, is only true in part, as they did not come direct from Egypt into Spain; for Dagha, who led the Gadelians into Spain, was the fifth in descent from Sru, under whose command they departed from Egypt, to elude the vengeance of Pharaoh an Tuir. From Egypt the Gadelians directed their course to the Island of Crete, in the Mediterranean sea, where they obtained a peaceable settlement, and civilized the rude manners of the inhabitants, by introducing the study of literature and the arts. They instructed them in the knowledge of the Divine Being, the reverence and obedience due to him, and the duties which he has thought proper to impose upon man.

Sru ruled over his followers in Crete 25 years, and by his death the government devolved upon Heber Scot, his son. After a period of twenty years administration, in the Island of Crete, he for some cause, unexplained by our annalists, abandoned the Island, A. M. 2096, and set sail for Phœnicia, the country of his ancestors, where he was kindly received by his relatives, and after obtaining the regal authority, he died full of years and virtue. His son, *Bamhain*, ascended the throne in spite of the opposition of *Naoine*, the legitimate descendant of Neaniul, and the rightful heir of the crown of Phœnicia. The contention of these competitors filled the kingdom with all the horrors of civil war. Fortune seemed long undecided, and the contending rivals alternately experienced the rewards of victory, and the vicissitudes of defeat. *Bamhain*, however, after a disturbed reign of 35 years, fell by the sword, and made way for his son, *Oghamhain*, who took command of the shattered forces of his father, and by fortune and perseverance, retrieved, in some degree, the losses which had been sustained during the former reign. He met, however, with that fate to which a scene of continued hostilities must have necessarily exposed him, and died in battle, A. M. 2176. His son, Tait, of whom nothing memorable is recorded, became his successor. After his death, which is supposed to have happened in 2211, the command devolved on *Aghnoin*, who defeated and slew his rival Riffleoir, the son of Riffil, the lineal descendant of Neaniul, the son of Phœnius. This victory, however, was productive of consequences which proved worse than a defeat; for the followers of Riffleoir, collecting all their strength, vowed vengeance on the house of Niul. To evade the storm that foreboded such terrible results, *Aghnoin* and his adherents resolved to abandon a country where peace and happiness could not be enjoyed any longer by them. They accordingly embarked on board of their fleet, and committed themselves to the guidance of winds and waves, without having shaped their course for any particular port of destination. On this voyage of chance, *Aghnoin*, was accompanied by his brother Heber, who presided as High Priest; by his three sons, *Ealloid*, *Laimh-*

Fionn, and *Laimh-Glas*, as well as by *Caicer*, and *Cing*, the two sons of *Heber*.

His fleet was wafted about for two years, by the caprice of tempests and billows, during which perilous period, *Aghnoin* died, A. M. 2241, and was succeeded in the command by his eldest son, *Laimh-Fionn*, the white-handed. Shortly after, he and his marine wanderers were driven by a storm into the Island of *Cherine*, (*Cyprus*,) where they stopped to refit their fleet and recruit themselves, for a space of fifteen months. Here death deprived them of the high priest, *Heber*, and his nephew *Laimh-Glas*, who were interred with all the pomp and honors due to their rank. *Heber* was succeeded in the pontificate by his son *Caicer*, whom the *Gadelians* consulted relative to their future destinies. Having sacrificed to the gods, and particularly to *Neptune*, he foretold, that the settlement reserved for their posterity, was the most western Island in Europe, and one which Princes of their race would rule over for many centuries; but that some generations should intervene before they could get possession of the "Green Isle of the Ocean." Having made the necessary preparations for a long voyage, they set sail, and directed their course to *Gothland*, where *Laimh-Fionn* had a son, who was reputed a Prince of wisdom and valor.

In this voyage they encountered every species of danger, as their course lay through perilous seas full of rocks, peopled by seducing sirens. To steer clear through these difficulties, we are gravely told by the *Psalter of Cashel*, that, as soon as the fleet reached the straits of *Messina*, the high priest, *Caicer*, caused the mariners to stuff their ears with wax, by which contrivance they escaped the rocks and quicksands, to which the magic influence of siren fascination drew so many hapless barks. We think that some poet, and not a historian, foisted this fable of the sirens, which originated with the *Phœnicians*, into the *Psalter of Cashel*, unknown to king *Cormoc*. The *Gadelians* succeeding according to their wishes in avoiding the dangers to which their voyage exposed them, at length effected a landing at *Getulia*, on the African coast.

As soon as they went on shore they proceeded to return solemn thanks to the gods for their safety. Having explored the country, and ascertained the character of its inhabitants, they came to a determination of making a permanent settlement in a land which appeared to be fertile and verdant.

Shortly after their arrival, their chief, *Laimh-Fionn*, died. A. M. 2281, and was succeeded by his eldest son, *HEBER*, called *Gluin-fionn*, or, the white-knee. Our annalists characterize him as a prince that united the prudence of the sage to the intrepidity of the warrior; but we are not told when or where he displayed these accomplishments; nor indeed is there any particular notice taken of the transactions of the *Gadelians* for a period of 315 years, which they are supposed to have remained in *Getulia*. By an ancient poem, written by *Giolla Caomhan*, we are informed that the *Gadelians* remained only thirty years in *Gothland*. But though *Keating* agrees with the author as to the country, he rejects the period of time which he assigns for their continuance, and asserts that there are

Irish records of great authority which relate that the Gadelians remained 150 years in the country, where eight generations passed away during their rule. This is indeed a period of history which is involved in a dusky mantle of obscurity through which the eye of inquiry will never be able to penetrate. Heber's throne was successively filled by his son Adhnoin-Fionn, his grand-son Feabhar-Glas, his great-grand-son Neannail, and by the descendants of the latter, Nuaghadh, Allad, Earachda, and Deaghfatha, the father of the renowned BRATHA. The latter prince, in early life betrayed a capacity for governing, and a spirit of ambition that spurned the narrow limits of his father's territories, and bid fair to shine with lustre in a suitable sphere of action.

No sooner had he assumed the sovereign authority than he formed the determination of gaining by conquest a country that would afford a sufficient scope for the display of his genius. He quickly fitted out a fleet, and having sailed through the Mediterranean Sea, and passed the pillars of Hercules, with some difficulty he succeeded in landing on the coast of Galacia, where he gallantly repulsed the natives, who flocked to the shores to oppose him.

BRATHA, after repelling the hostile attacks of a warlike and ferocious people, caused breast-works and entrenchments to be raised to secure his army from the further molestation of the natives. According to the Psalter of Cashel, Bratha and his son Breogan had to fight fifty-four pitched battles before they were able finally to establish their dominion in Spain. Death terminated the glorious reign of Bratha, A. M. 2597, when his valiant son, BREOGAN, mounted the throne of Spain by the consent of the nation.

He built a city for the residence of his people, which he surrounded with a wall and deep fosse. From him the city was called Breogan Sgiath, or the shield of Breogan. He also erected a light-house for the direction of shipping from England and Ireland, with which countries his subjects carried on an extensive trade. This Pharos was furnished with reflecting and refracting glasses, globes, and other nautical instruments. This heroic prince, from whom the dynasty of the house of Braganza is descended, was the father of ten legitimate sons, namely, Cuailyne, Cuala, Blath, Aibhle, Nar, Bregha, Fuadh, Muirtheimhne, Ith, and Bille. The latter was the father of GOLLAMH, who was designated, by way of distinction and dignity, "*Mile-Espaine*," or the hero of Spain, who, under the name of Milesius, cuts such a distinguished figure in the annals of Erin.

Breogan and his sons gained many victories in Spain, and finally succeeded in reducing that country and Portugal to his subjection. His son GOLLAMH covered himself with glory in every battle, and his skill and heroism generally secured the victory.

Having finally established their settlement in Spain, Gollamh (Milesius) became desirous of an opportunity of entwining new laurels in his wreath of fame. By his father's consent he fitted out an expedition with which he sailed from the port of Corunna, in order to assist his friends in Phœnicia, who were at this time greatly distressed by foreign wars. He was accompanied by twelve literary and scientific men who were to take observations in astronomy and

the arts, and keep a regular journal of the discoveries they might make, or the improvements they might meet.

The chivalric prince was received with warm demonstrations of respect and regard by his cousin Reffleoir, at the Scythian court. His acknowledged military talents and undaunted courage pointed him out to the king as a person every way qualified to command his armies. In order to knit the bonds of relationship still closer, and add "a tower of strength" to his power, the king gave Milesius his daughter, the beautiful Seang, in marriage. At the head of the army he soon expelled the invaders from the dominions of his father-in-law, suppressed revolts, and humbled all the enemies of the Scythian nation.

He had two sons by the Phœnician Princess, Don and Aireach in giving birth to the latter of whom she died. The father was assiduous in instructing his sons in military talents, and in all the accomplishments that can adorn and polish intellect. His victories and his generosity raised him so high in the estimation of the people that his popularity filled the mind of the king with alarm and jealousy, who, apprehensive that the Spanish prince might attempt to usurp the sovereign power and wrest it from his family, after the example of his ancestors, took measures to have him assassinated. But some friend intimated privately to Gollamb the fate that was intended for him, who on hearing the treachery of his father-in-law, resolved to have vengeance. In order to deceive the king he feigned indisposition, whilst his adherents were making the necessary preparations to accomplish his intention. All being ready for the execution of his plan, he at the head of a chosen band of his countrymen forced the gates of the palace, and dispatched the ungenerous REFFLEOIR. Milesius not thinking it prudent to entrust himself any longer to the faith of the Phœnicians, set sail for Egypt, where he proffered his services to Pharaoh Nectonebus, the king, who was then engaged in war with the Ethiopians. Pharaoh wishing to avail himself of the assistance of a prince whose exploits were the theme of universal applause, immediately appointed him generalissimo of his armies.

He engaged the Ethiopians in several conflicts, with incredible success, and proved himself worthy of the dignity conferred upon him by the Egyptian Monarch, who, in consideration of the important services which he experienced at his hands, gave him his daughter, *Scota*, in marriage. By *Scota* he had two sons, born in Egypt, Heber-Fionn, and Ambergin. During the absence of Milesius, his father Bille died in Spain, and in consequence, the Spaniards began to revolt from the Gadelian government. The moment Milesius heard of the disaffection of the Spaniards, he took a final leave of his father-in-law, and hastened back to chastise the rebels of his country. No sooner was he landed than his very name, like that of him who threw Alexander, Hannibal, and Cæsar into the shade, NAPOLEON, communicated fear and consternation to the hearts of the insurgents. Tranquillity was soon restored, and Milesius, before his death, had the happiness of reigning over a well affected and united people. He died, A. M. 2706, advanced in years,

who, after a short time, and was succeeded by his son *Heber-Fionn*, shared the royal power with his younger brother, Heremon. Dr. Keating alleges, but we know not on what authority, that Milesius' voyage from Egypt to Spain, was perilous and protracted, occupying, according to his unauthenticated account, a period of two years, during which he visited Thrace, where his wife Scotsa was delivered of a son, called IR; that after refitting his fleet in the Hellespont, he again put to sea, and passing through a series of circumnavigations, in the course of which he touched the north of Britain, (where another son was born to him, whom he named *Colpa*, or the swordsmen,) he at length made the coast of Spain. "There is certainly no question" says the profound and erudite CHARLES O'CONNOR, "but that the account of the feats and exploits of the Gadelian chiefs, taken in a great measure from our Bards and Fileas, rather than from our authentic annals, is mixed with much fable and colored with the die of invention; and we need not doubt of the corruption of the stream, as it is mixed with the current of succeeding ages: it is enough that the chiefest heroes mentioned by our old Bards, were equally celebrated in the traditions of other learned nations."

Our annalists tell us that Milesius had eight sons born in wedlock, and twenty-four who were the fruits of illicit love.

HEBER-FIONN, his eldest son by Seang, his first wife, in conjunction with his younger brother Heremon, assumed the reins of sovereignty, and Amhergin was elevated to the pontificate. By the assistance of the twelve Philosophers, who accompanied Gollamh, alias, *Milesius*, to Phœnicia and Egypt, these Princes were able to give ample encouragement to the arts and sciences. While they were employed in the salutary endeavor of ameliorating the condition of their people, by diffusing knowledge and morals among them, the country was visited with the dreadful calamities of pestilence and famine, by which they were so weakened, that the neighboring states were once more encouraged to attack them.

In this fallen state of their fortunes, they were unable to surmount the difficulties and dangers that environed them; nor could they devise any means to resist the hostile attacks with which they were threatened. While bewildered in the mazes of this emergency, without a ray of hope to warm their despair-chilled hearts, Amhergin, as if suddenly seized with prophetic inspiration, reminded them of the ancient prediction of his predecessor, Caicer. His words raised their spirits from the deepest despondency to the summit of expectation. He informed them that the *Western Island* of the Atlantic, which was unknown to their ancestors in the days of Caicer, was that destined for the posterity of Milesius. The people, on hearing the speech of the high Priest, called on their chiefs to conduct them to that Isle, where the gods promised them prosperity and happiness. After deliberating in council, they resolved on sending ITH, the son of Breogan, on whose prudence and sagacity they could rely, to visit the Island, and ascertain the strength and character of its inhabitants.

ITH, accordingly set sail from the port of Corunna, in Spain, A. M. 2735, in a strong ship, attended by his son, *Lughaidh*, and a select body of 150 armed men, besides the crew.

His voyage having proved prosperous, he reached the northern coast of Ireland, in a few days after his departure, and landed with all his followers at *Daire Calgach*, now *Londonderry*, where he immediately offered sacrifices to Neptune, the favorite marine god of the Phœnicians and Gadelians. The omens did not prove as propitious as he expected, but relying on the fulfilment of the ancient prophecy, he did not suffer his mind to brood in sadness on the discouraging divination. As soon as the Gadelians pitched their tents, numbers of the inhabitants approached their camp to know who they were, and what the strange adventurers wanted in the country of Innis-fail. ITH was astonished to find himself addressed by the people of a foreign clime, in his vernacular language,* and gave the inquiries to understand, in the same idiom, that the identity of their language convinced him that he and they must have sprung from one common source of Japhethian ancestry; that he was driven on their coasts by stress of weather, and that he intended to return as soon as possible to his friends in Spain. The people sympathizing in his distresses, informed him that the Danan Princes, who then ruled the nation, were holding a Congress at *Oilcach Nead*, in the peninsula of *Innis-Shone*, not far from his camp, whither they advised him to repair. This congress assembled here, (where in days of yore the kings of Ulster held their courts,) for the purpose of making an equitable partition of the crown Jewels between three brothers, who had disputed about them. He accordingly presented himself before this assembly, and by his courtly bearing and eloquent address, impressed the Belgian chiefs with so high an idea of his character, that they unanimously agreed to make him their umpire in deciding an unfortunate difference, which, if not averted, was likely to kindle the flames of civil war in the country. The contending brothers unanimously declared that they would cheerfully submit to his decision.

ITH, unwilling to incur the displeasure of either of the Princes, adjudged, that the jewels should be equally divided among the three brothers. He expatiated at the same time, on the advantages resulting from peace and concord, and observed that a country so fruitful, indented as it was with rivers that watered green meadows, and verdant valleys of flowery pasturage, which were never visited

* The great antiquity of the Irish language, which is the same as the ancient Scythian, affords another proof of the Phœnician origin of the Irish nation, and that the elements of their idiom were brought to Ireland when the use of letters was in its infancy. Indeed, the old Irish bears so great an affinity to the ancient Hebrew, that to those who are masters of both, they appear plainly to be only dialects of the same tongue. This surely lays a fair foundation for an ancient history to be built upon: "for a nation and language are both of an age, and if a language be ancient, the people must be as old."—WARNER.

"In order to discover the original of the Irish nation, I was at the pains to compare all European languages with that of Ireland, and I found it had little agreement with any of them. I then had recourse to the Celtic, the original language of the ancient Celtæ, or Scythians, and I found the affinity so great that there was scarcely a shade of difference. There being such an exact agreement between them, and the Irish having no affinity with any known language in the world, excepting the Hebrew and the Phœnician, this is sufficient, I think, to procure that credit to Irish history which it may justly challenge."—RAYMOND.

with the devastation of the hurricane, seemed designed by bountiful nature, as the abode of contentment and prosperity.

Having reconciled the brothers to each other, he took his leave, and departed with the presents that they presented him, for his ship. No sooner was he gone, however, than the congress began to reflect on the warm eulogium which he had pronounced on the beauty and fertility of the Island; and many of the chiefs expressed their fears, that so clever and sagacious a leader, would, on his return to his own country, induce the Gadelians to make an attempt to possess the kingdom by conquest. This apprehension, the moment it was expressed, possessed the opinions of the whole assembly. Accordingly a resolution was instantly adopted to cut off the foreigner before he had time to embark. MAC CUIL, one of their military Chieftains, with a force of 150 soldiers, immediately pursued Ith, and soon overtook him, as he marched through a circuitous route, in order to have a better view of the country. ITH, perceiving his pursuers armed, soon concluded what their object was, began to retreat precipitately to his ship, with his little band, and succeeded notwithstanding the celerity of the enemy's march, in gaining the shore. Here, within a cable's length of his vessel, resigning himself to the impulse of that military ardor which he inherited from his ancestors, and which neither the sagacity of age, nor the presence of fatal danger could restrain, he bravely turned on his assailants. The conflict, which soon became sanguinary, was supported with accustomed valor on the one side, and with that confidence which is usually inspired by superior numbers, on the other. After a long and doubtful struggle, the gallant ITH was mortally wounded, and his brave companions in arms, more desirous to preserve the body of their beloved commander from insult than to contend for the honor of an uncertain victory—a victory from which they could derive no immediate advantage—made good their retreat to the ship. The place where this battle was fought is called to this day *Mugha Ith*, or the scene of Ith's defeat, on the banks of Lough Foyle.

The Gadelians had not proceeded far to sea before their heroic leader died of his wounds. His son LUGHAIDH assumed the command, and conducted them safely to Brigantium. He was careful however to preserve the body of his father till he arrived on the Spanish coast, where it was brought on shore and exposed to the view of the Gadelians, to inspire them with a just resentment of the treachery which they experienced from the inhabitants of Ireland.

Lughaidh then took occasion to inform his countrymen of the salubrity of the climate and luxuriance of the soil of Erin, and that as discord and division prevailed amongst its rulers, that it might be easily conquered. The effect of this speech was to kindle the ambition and resentment of the Gadelians, and the hope of conquest and the desire of revenge gave an impetuous incentive to their resolution of invading Ireland; with what success shall be seen in the next chapter.

Having now given a brief history of the origin and wanderings of

the Gadelians, it is necessary to notice some objections which may be urged against the account we have given of their voyages and travels.

The grounds on which this account is founded have been furnished by our most creditable historians. It may be said that from the imperfect knowledge of navigation in those remote times, it is not probable that the Gadelians could accomplish so many voyages from Egypt to Crete—from Crete to Scythia—thence to Africa—thence to Spain, and thence to Ireland. To remove this objection we must refer to what we have already said with regard to the early knowledge of navigation, in vindicating the history of the four Antemilesian Colonies.

“Voyages and transmigrations,” says M’Geoghegan, “where the humor of these ancient times. Men had not yet taken root; and territorial possessions were not established by law, nor defended by justice. The Tyrians, after coasting Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, Gaul, and all the countries which surround the Mediterranean Sea, without stopping at any, entered the ocean by the straits of Gibraltar, and established themselves on the western coast of Spain, where they built the city of Cadiz, a long time before Utica and Carthage were founded, and while naval knowledge was yet in its infancy.” In addition to the remarks of the Abbe M’Geoghegan, we might observe that the Phœnicians, the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Carthaginians sent colonies into different countries, at a very early age. We are told by the historians that even Carthage, in the age of her glory, after founding 300 cities on the coast of Africa, finding herself still surcharged with inhabitants, sent General Hannon with a fleet of 30,000 volunteers, to survey the countries lying beyond the pillars of Hercules, and to establish colonies, as Strabo terms it, “on these remote confines.”

The Scythians, from whom the Gadelians descended, and who were masters of the vast regions which extend from the Boristhenes to the county of the Massagetes, and from the Saces to the east of the Caspian Sea, had neither cities nor houses. They were always itinerant, and dwelt in tents, now in one country, and again in another.

The ships of King Solomon traded to Arabia, Persia, India, and even to the western coasts of Africa, so that it is more than probable that from the earliest times, and immediately after the flood, men had discovered the secret of constructing vessels after the model of the ark, which had preserved their ancestors from the waters of the deluge.

“Whatever truth,” says Dr. Warner, “there may be in the Gadelian voyages, it appears incontestible that the people derive their origin from the Scythians. Their name, *Kinea-Scuit*, (*i. e.* the clan of Scythia,) or Scots, denote their eastern lineage. The agreement of foreign writers with their Fileas and Bards confirms it. Newton, after Appian and others, says that Greece and all Europe have been peopled by the Cimmerians, or Scythians, from the borders of the Pontus Euxinus, who led a wandering life, like the Tartars of the north of Asia.”

It is true indeed that our Senachies have made some mistakes in their manner of conducting the Gadelians from Scythia to Spain, which, instead of sailing through the Mediterranean, they would fain make us believe that they bent their nautical course through ways that were utterly impassable. But though they have mistaken the line which the Gadelian emigrants pursued, yet they have carefully preserved the names of the different places where they had landed, in their passage from Phœnicia to Spain. This proves satisfactorily that the names related in our annals have been scrupulously preserved without alteration or correction. The testimony adduced from foreign writers by Mr. O'Connor, (which we shall insert in a future note,) in support of the emigration of the *Scota Milesians* from Egypt to Spain, adds strength and solidity to our historical monuments.

CHAPTER VI.

The landing of the Milesians in Ireland. The names of the principal Commanders who conducted the expedition from Spain. They repulse the Danans, who attacked them on their landing on the coast of Kerry:—a decisive battle, in which the Tuatha de Danans are overthrown, and the victory gives the Milesians possession of the whole Island. Objections answered.

THE desire of revenge and the hope of conquest gave a strong impulse to the warlike spirit that actuated the Milesians. Their armament was prepared with incredible despatch, in the port of Brigantium,* and nothing that zeal or assiduity could supply was

* This city was, as we have already stated, built by BREOGAN, the grandfather of Milesius, who, according to our historians and some French writers, was the first prince that raised revenues and built castles in Spain. Our old annalists often distinguish the Milesians by the name of *Clana Breogan*, or the followers of Breogan. Whitaker says that these Brigantes made frequent voyages to South Britain, before they had invaded Ireland.

INNIS, the Scotch writer, who has cavilled so morosely at every relation in our history, exultingly quotes Nennius, a British historian, who wrote in the ninth century, to impugn the allegation of our annals. But what does that quotation amount to? Why it strengthens the bulwarks that defend the historic records of Ireland. Nennius mentions the celebrated light tower of Brigantium, and its reflecting glasses. Innis conjectures that the use of glass was not known in the age of Breogan; but Innis and Macpherson were such extensive dealers in conjecture and hypothesis, that the light of truth was as offensive to their eyes as the rays of the sun are to those of the moping owls. That the ancients were acquainted with the use of such glasses as we are told Breogan fixed on his Pharos, is a fact well authenticated.

The ships that sailed to Syria and Egypt were easily descried and reflected by means of a mirror placed on the Colossus of Rhodes. Who has not read of the destruction of the Roman fleet by the burning-glasses of Archimedes?

LEO, in his description of Africa, also informs us, that one of the Ptolemies erected a tower of burning-glasses, at Alexandria, by the intervention of which ships could be set on fire at a great distance.

wanting in its completion. It consisted of 150 ships, well manned and appointed, which sailed under the orders of forty commanders, from the port of Brigantium, or Corunna, with a favorable wind. In the foremost place among the leaders, we must class the sons of Milesius ;—these were Don and Aireach, born in Phœnicia—Heber—Fionn, and Amhergin, born in Egypt ;—Ir, and Colpa, born, as will appear in the last chapter, during the voyage of Milesius from Egypt to Spain ;—and Aranann and Heremon, born in Spain. Next to these in the station of honor were the sons of Breogan, named BREAGHA, from whom Mag-Breagha, his settlement in Meath, derives its name : Cuala, who has given name to *Sliab Cuala* :—Cualgne, whose name is commemorated by *Sliab Cualgne*, in the county of Down, and *Bladh*, after whom the mountain of *Blama*, in Leinster, was called *Sliab Blamaht* ;—Fuadh also honored a mountain with his cognomen ; and the celebrated scene of the death and defeat of the Ulster champion, Cucullain Murtheimhne (now Nullacrew, in the county of Louth) owes its appellation to one of the sons of Breogan. Besides those were Nare and Eibhle, as well as their nephews, Lughaidh and Er, Dorba, Fearon Feargna, the sons of Heber, and Muimhne Luighne, Laighne and Palp. The other leaders were Buas, Breas, Buarghne, Fulman, Mantan, Caicer, Suerge, En, Un, Eatan, Sobhairce, Seadna, Goistean, Bille and Lui. They were also attended by Scota, the widow of Milesius, and several other ladies of distinction, besides many Spanish women, the wives of these marine Brigantiums, and the Milesians were called from their city of Brigantium.

The adventurers, after coasting along a part of Spain and France, arrived, at length, on the southern coasts of Ireland, and landed at Inbher Sceine, now Bantry Bay.* It received the name of Sceine, from Sceine, the wife of Amhergen, who, in her impatience to go ashore, fell overboard, and was drowned in this bay.

Dr. Keating informs us that, prior to the landing of the Milesians in Bantry, they had attempted to land in Inbher-Slainge, now the harbour of Wexford ; but the Danans, by their magical enchantments, wrapped the Island in a cloud, so that it appeared to the Milesians under the form of a hog, from which it got the appellation of *Muc-Innis*, or the Hog's Isle.

As soon as all their forces were disembarked, the chiefs marshalled them in order of battle, and marched to *Sliabh-mis*, a strong position, where they encamped. Here, in a council of war, they resolved on

* Bantry Bay, in the county of Cork, distant 217 miles from Dublin, is capable of containing all the shipping in Europe. The shores that fringe this fine bay are bold and picturesque, presenting sloping hills, crowned with monastic ruins, and verdure-clad rocks which are fantastically grouped in the fore-ground of the landscape. The town of Bantry looks as if it emerged out of the sea ; it is a pleasant and cheerful village, that is much frequented by strangers during the summer-months. Colonel Ireton, whose progress through Ireland was marked with fire and blood, caused Bantry to feel the effects of Cromwellian mercy, by putting such of the inhabitants, as were well disposed to the royal cause, to the sword. Formerly immense shoals of pilchards were caught in the Bay, which made the town a great fish mart, and afforded employment and emolument to many of the inhabitants. But of late years not a single pilchard has appeared on the coast.

sending an embassy to the court of the Danan Princes, to demand their resignation of the sovereignty of the island, and reparation for the death of their gallant relative ITH, whom the Danans, in violation of the laws of nations, had slain in a treacherous manner. Ambergin, who was delegated to deliver this embassy, attended by some of the Milesian chiefs, appeared before the sons of Cearmada, and announced, in haughty terms, the purport of his arrival; laying at the same time great stress on the formidable forces which the invaders had ready to wrest the sceptre of authority from them, in case that hostilities should supercede pacific overtures. This threat, as the crafty Druid intended, intimidated the Danans, who, after some consultation, informed him that they were not then prepared for an engagement, having no previous notice of their arrival: that it was not honorable for so martial a people as the Milesians, to take an enemy by surprise; and that, if they gave them time to embody their army, they would then try the fortune of war in a general engagement. After an animated debate that gave rise to a warm discussion, it was finally agreed on that the Milesians should re-embark with all their forces; that they should clear the coast, or, as some say, sail nine waves from the shore; and that if they made good their landing a second time, the Danans would consider it a just invasion, and either submit as a tributary people, or oppose them as a hostile nation, as they might think proper.

This compact was ratified by both parties, and, according to its conditions, the Milesians returned on board, with all their forces and equipments, and sailed once more the prescribed distance into the ocean; but when tacking about in order to make good their second landing, a violent storm arose, which our annalists ascribe to the enchantment of the Damnonii. Be this, however, as it may, the Milesians suffered severely. The rage of the tempest and the want of sea-room, conspired to produce the disaster, that was near annihilating the Milesian fleet. The ship commanded by Don was driven into the Shannon, and dashed to pieces on a ledge of rocks near Killaloe, where every soul on board perished. The same fate overtook Ir's galley, which was wrecked on the coast of Desmond. The remainder of the fleet, though dismally shattered, stood out to sea to wait the cessation of the storm. While the gale raged in its fury, Arranan, who with valiant courage ascended one of the masts of his ship, to secure some sails, which no other person on board durst attempt, was dashed upon the deck by the violence of the squall, and killed. Knock-Arranan, in the county of Kerry, still commemorates the place of his sepulture. The squadron under the orders of Heremon, though dreadfully dismantled and crippled, were fortunate enough to weather the destructive tempest, and make land at Inbher-Colpa, the swordsman who perished here together with Aireach, where the river of Boyne disembogues itself into the sea, two miles S. W. of Drogheda. Heber and Ambergin were equally successful in making their landing good on the coast of Kerry. While the Milesians were thus buffeting the warfare of the elements, the Damnonii were making the most active preparations for the warfare of the sword. The crisis of their fate was at hand, and

life and empire were the forfeits of the great game which they had to play. They raised their entire people *en masse*, and marched to meet the invaders with a resolute spirit, animated by hope and a well-founded confidence in their own valor and fortitude. The Milesians under Heber and Amhergin, far from being disheartened by their marine disasters, assumed a bold attitude, and presented a formidable front to their assailants, who fiercely attacked them in their entrenched camp at *Sliabh-mis*, in the vicinity of Tralee.* After a desperate conflict, where sanguinary carnage reared its colossal throne with human bodies, victory, dearly purchased, declared herself the favoring goddess of the Milesians. The Danans left 1000 of their slain on the bloody field. The Milesians lost 300 of their bravest troops, among whom were two venerable Druids, who, during the action, encouraged them with their prayers, while they fought like heroes. We must not omit also to record the glorious death of *Scota*, the widow of Milesius, and *Fais*, the wife of Un, who, like intrepid Amazons, joined in the strife of the battle. The ladies were buried next day, with all the pomp of funeral solemnities. *Scota*, in a valley called to this day "*Glan-Scota*," near Tralee; and *Fais*, in another valley, which in honor of her memory is still denominated "*Glan-Fais*."

The Milesians, now flushed with conquest, and their leader, Heber, anticipating future victories from the success that attended his arms at the battle of Tralee, boldly marched with his triumphant army into the interior of the country; cheered by the hope of meeting some of his brothers or kindred, who had been separated from him by the late storm. After a long and tedious march, he arrived at Drogheda, directed thither, in all probability, by some communications which he had received, that his brother Heremon had landed in that port.

But whether fortune, or a knowledge of the event, had guided his course, he had the satisfaction of finding his friends here before him, who informed him of the melancholy fate of his five brothers. The forces of Heber and Heremon having thus happily formed a junction, they made the necessary preparations for opening the ensuing campaign under brilliant auspices. They now considered the Island their own by right of conquest, and they resolved to spurn all overtures that the Tuatha de Danans might make, which should not have for their basis an unconditional surrender of the government into their hands as Lords paramount. Having learned from their spies, that the Danans were strongly encamped on the plains of Taylton, in Meath, not far distant, they quickly determined to march immediately and force them to an engagement, which they

* Tralee is the capital of the county of Kerry, a flourishing town situated on a fine bay. Tralee was granted, in 1173, by Denis McCarthy, Prince of Cork, to Maurice Fitz-Maurice, the ancestor of the Earl of Kerry, for military services rendered that Prince. Richard II. of England created Thomas Fitz-Maurice Viscount Kerry, A. D. 1396. The ruins of a monastery founded here in 1261, for Dominican friars, by one of this family, proclaim the ancient grandeur of Tralee. McCarthy's castle, which Elizabeth gave to one of her marauders of the name of Denny, is still in good preservation.

doubted not would finally decide their fate. It is not improbable that the Fir-bolgs, or Belgæ, ill brooking the yoke to which they had, as will be seen by our preceding chapters, been subjected by the ascendancy of the Damnonii, joined the standard of the Milesians on the present occasion. It would be unwise policy to stand aloof, knowing, as they must, that their neutrality would be punished by those on whom fortune would confer the sovereignty of the island. And to this course they were not devoted by the dictates of policy alone ;—the desire of revenge, which generally possesses, in spite of religion and philosophy, great sway over human feelings, must have, undoubtedly, co-operated with the suggestions of prudence.

HEBER and HEREMON having reached the plains of Tailtean, in Meath, where the Danan princes were prepared to receive them, sent a second embassy, ordering them to resign their dominion, or appoint a day to decide who were the most worthy of imperial power. This message of defiance and insult ignited the coldest of Danan hearts with the flame of patriotism and courage. The Damnonii, undismayed by the disasters that had hitherto attended their arms, boldly replied, that they would die possessed of that regal dignity with which they were then invested—a dignity which they had not only acquired, but maintained during a period of nearly two centuries, by their bravery and valor. A battle now became inevitable.

Both armies entered the field on the appointed day, with the resolution to either conquer or die. The Milesians were led by the three brothers, Heber, Heremon, and Amhergin ; and the Damnonii by three brethren Princes, MAG GREIN, MAC CEATH, and MAC CUIL, the latter of whom, it will be remembered, was he that slew ITH. The cheerful lark had scarcely carolled to the morning breeze her peace-inspiring lay, when the banners of destruction waved their sable influence in the dusky air, and called forth the hostile troops, who advanced with awful determination to the carnage of ambition. The Damnonii imagined that they fought under the protection of heaven, because they fought, indeed, in defence of their country and of its liberties and deities ; they fought under the sanction of justice, to defend from the insult of hostile invaders, their wives and children, those fondest pledges of humanity, that cling to us with ten-fold endearment amid the horrors of death, and the menaces of danger. The Milesians, on the other hand, full of the idea that Ireland was the country destined for them by the appointment of the Fates—the promised land of prediction, derived that confidence from belief, which the Tuatha de Danans did from the justice of their cause ; and those feelings of revenge which the death of Ith aroused formerly in their bosoms, were now in a vehement blaze of inveterate rancour. Animated with these incentives, and nearly equal in point of numbers, they rushed furiously to the charge. The contest, though terrible, was supported on both sides with equal courage and resolution. The scene of horror, which commenced before the morning sun had reached the eastern horizon, still waved the purple ensign of slaughter when he terminated his solar course in the western main.

It is, indeed, to be lamented that ancient histories, attentive only

to the general issue of engagements, neglect detailing the particular rencontres and evolutions, which have led to victory or defeat. This omission is partly accounted for by one circumstance which generally decided the issue of all battles in those early times. Military science, in comparison to what it is now, was scarcely known; and victory, instead of emanating from the skill and dispositions of an able general, was always the result of personal bravery and physical strength. The historian had, therefore, little more to relate than the mere issue of an engagement; but though this was generally the case, particular circumstances sometimes occurred that gave interest to the circumstantial details of military operations. In the present instance we are told that the opposing chiefs, wearied with mutual carnage, sought for each other, to decide by personal combat the destiny of their people. They soon met, and both armies, as if by mutual consent, suspended the work of havoc and death, to witness the gigantic struggle between these *Horatii* and *Curatii*, on whose swords the fate of Ireland, like that of Rome, now vacillated. Fortune awarded the triumph to the Milesians. Mac Cuil fell by the arm of Heber. Mac Ceath met the same fate from the hand of Heremon; and Mac Grein yielded to the conquering arm of Amhergin.

The Danans, dispirited and dismayed by the fall of their royal chiefs, submitted to the over-ruling power of the fates, and retreated precipitately from the field; but the Milesians, determined to follow up their victory, pursued them in their flight to *Sleagh-Cualgne*, where they made a stand, and fought with such desperation, that the Milesian advanced guard was cut to pieces, and its leaders, CUALGNE and FUADH, the sons of Breogan, slain at its head; but Heremon and Heber coming up with their reserves, broke the line of the Danans, and spread annihilation and death through their ranks. This defeat sealed their overthrow, and left them without even a hope of being ever again able to recover the dominion of Ireland, which had been swayed by nine of their Princes, during a period of one hundred and ninety-five years. Such of the Danans as were too proud to wear the chains of Milesian subjection, retired to Britain, and settled in Devonshire and Cornwall. In allusion to the victories of the Milesians, Dr. Warner says:—"From some of the poetical fragments translated in the English version of Keating's history, it appears that there is still extant a beautiful description of the battles between the Milesians and the Damnonians, in which are celebrated the funeral rites that were performed for two of the Spanish Druids, as well as for the three Princesses. These fragments not only give us a great idea of their poetry, but also show in what manner all their public transactions were delivered down and registered by their Bards."

In the foregoing narrative we have essayed to make ancient and modern history the basis of our detail respecting the Milesians. We certainly disclaim the idea which some critics have of an impartial historian—that his duty should be to state facts, *without note or comment*, as the observations of the historian, however just, must necessarily excite feelings in some quarter that are better hushed in

the tranquil calm of mutual conciliation and eternal oblivion. This view of impartiality might have some claim to our consideration, if human actions could be contemplated independent of that inseparable link which connects them with the motives that first produced them, or that still perpetuates their existence ;—but as human actions have no value in themselves, except what they derive from these motives, as even the worst action cannot be criminal, if there be no intention of crime in the mind of the perpetrator ; and as the best action cannot be pronounced virtuous, without volition, or a consciousness of its moral value on the part of him who performs it ;—nay, as it may become the most detestable of crimes, if perpetrated with the most vile intention ; this view, we think, of impartiality should be rejected with dignified disdain. Nor can any historian with a heart throbbing with feeling obey the restraint which this stoic principle inculcates, unless he be utterly divested of human passion, and that he can arm his mind with that specious philosophic indifference, which abstracting itself from all the interests of humanity, considers virtue and vice independent of their association with the propensities of man ; and views them as mere instruments of utility, not as impressed with the characters of good or evil. Indeed, the frigid, abstract philosopher may look down with a smile of profound indifference on every thing which man esteems great and exalted ;—he may deem virtue founded on a visionary basis, that exists only in the fantastic imagery of an ideal creation, and vice to be only its reverse ;—he may accordingly deem a virtuous course of action to be the mark of consequential and necessary error, not the expression of motives in the mind of man, that are either virtuous or meritorious *a priori* ; and which assume that character only from a combination of erroneous principles, premises, or *data*, on which the genius of superior reason, in its redeeming excellence, frowns with an expression of sovereign contempt. Be it so ; it is not for us to investigate the claims of modern philosophy, or to derogate from its high pretensions in this boasted age, when literature and science have poured upon intellect the milder influence of their auspicious irradiation—when the muses woo it to the academic shade—and when the arts make it the shrine of their trophies ;—but as a historian we feel we cannot avail ourself of this sublime privilege, or endure the restraints which it would impose upon our passions and national prejudices. Who can point out the historic stream that is not discolored by natural sympathy or partial propensities ? To say that the historian should not seem to take part one way or other, in the opposite interests that become the subject of his page, nor betray that warmth of temper in his observations, which in the opinion of those who make the assertion, is a certain indication of weakness or of partiality—is, in other words, to maintain that there is no reason to support truth in preference to error—to join with the innocent against the guilty—to vindicate the oppressed from the wrongs of the oppressor, the slave from the inflictions of the tyrant ; and that there is nothing in the advocacy of suffering virtue, of devoted patriotism, that can excite our generous feelings or national sympathy—that can provoke our anger, or kindle our indignation.

This doctrine is surely the gloomy heterodoxy of cold-hearted misanthropes, who never felt a pang of pity for the wrongs and sorrows of their native land, and who, instead of having hearts sensitively "alive to each fine impulse," exult at the adversity that breaks the spirit of the struggling patriot—wanton in the political debasement, and revel in the civil privations of their fellow-creatures. The bronzed cheeks of such torpid stoics were never furrowed by the genial tear of compassion, their hearts never glowed with affection for country or kindred. Yes, say these shallow philosophers, those matters should not be exhibited in the range of history; they are out of the province of the historian, and solicit no investigation; for they make no appeal to the tribunal of history. To this historical heresy we shall never conform; we indignantly abjure its canons, and sincerely renounce its hypocritical and sophisticated dogmas.

A strict adherence to truth should guide the pen of the historian in his investigation; he should "weigh the moral characters," which he introduces on the historic theatre, "in the balance of the sanctuary," before he gives them a form and impress on the adamantine sculpture of history. He should have a mind too inflexible to be bent by the hands of prejudice, and too impenetrable to be impressed by political or religious prepossessions. The task in which he is engaged, is one of the most invidious nature; he sits as judge to determine the opinion that posterity should entertain of departed characters, and this opinion can only be just so far as it quadrates with the irrevocable sentence that has been passed upon them, at the awful tribunal of eternity—a sentence not founded on the external conduct, but on the internal organization of the moral system. The impartial historian should, indeed, divest himself of all those arbitrary passions and propensities, that are not founded in the original constitution of justice and immutable laws of humanity. He must "*consider right and wrong in their invariable state, content himself with the slow progress of his name, and commit his claims to the justice of posterity;*" but in flinging off the incubus of bigotry and intolerance, let him still tenaciously retain the ægis of truth, and when he combats with this invulnerable panoply, the shafts of objection and disputation shall fall blunted at his feet; he may therefore speak with confidence and spirit;—*Verite sans peur.*"

In resuming the defence of our ancient annals, we shall commence by observing, that all the arguments advanced against them are of a negative character. They have not been rejected on the authority of contemporary writers; they have not been found refuted by the historical monuments of other nations; on the contrary, the more accurately they have been compared and contrasted with them, the more their claims to authenticity have been established on the basis of demonstration. We have already stated that we candidly admit that there is an admixture of fable running through the veins of the early history of Ireland; but where is the history to be found that is not tinged with the coloring of poetic fiction? The late Mr. CHARLES O'CONNOR, of Ballinagar, to whose learned inquiries into the antiquities of his country, our history is so much indebted, has

taken much pains in comparing and collating our ancient chronicles with the contemporary and parallel accounts of other nations, the result of which stamps the seal of authenticity on our Milesian origin. We are happy to avail ourselves of his profound researches, as they will cast a blaze of illustration on the historic narrative, which we have given in the preceding chapters, of the early colonization of Ireland. "After a diligent examination," says this erudite historian, "of our fabulous and mythological history, I sought whether any parts of it could be supported by *parallel accounts* from other ancient and learned nations, who lived on the continent. I thought such a scrutiny the more necessary, as the original reports of so remote a people as those of Ireland must, upon the first review, be equally suspected with those of the *northern* countries. The satisfaction which I have received in this inquiry has, indeed, greatly exceeded my expectation. I own with great pleasure, that my lights in these parallel researches were chiefly owing to the system of antiquities and chronology left us by Sir Isaac Newton:—it is he, and, I think, he *only*, who gives the most authentic and rational account of the introduction of arts, letters, and agriculture into Europe; and it is to his chiefly that the *Scottish* account of those matters can be reconciled. See then an additional and an unexpected degree of credit brought home to our accounts, and that without the least knowledge or design of the great author who gave it! The learned of Europe stood aghast, amazed at the novelty of Sir Isaac's system:—and who can, without equal admiration, behold the *remotest* nation in the *west* transmitting such relations as prove a comment and support to that system?" As it is impossible that such an agreement should happen from concert, or start from chance, the consideration of it will be important. We will previously exhibit, in opposite columns, a short view of this connexion.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS OF FOREIGN AND IRISH HISTORIANS RESPECTING
THE MILESIAN COLONY.

I.

Foreign Testimonies.

* An Emigrant Colony of

I.

The Native Fileas. (1)

* The Iberian Scots, border-

* A colony of Iberians went to Europe, gave the name of Iberus (Ebro) to a river in Spain, and occupied Spain itself. *Ruæus ex Appian in Æneid.*

* Leabar—Gabala—*Lib. I. Keating's MSS. Ogygia*, page 66.

(1) The FILEAS were the highest orders of the Bards; they were the royal historiographers, and ranked at the great convocation of learned professors that assembled at Tara annually, next to the Druidical order. In all wars and dissensions their persons and properties were sacred and inviolable. They were endowed by the government; and the donations given them by military chiefs, ambitious of having their fame consecrated in their songs, were immense. Their privileges were often detrimental to the state. If they libelled innocence, or even vilified the monarch himself, they were exempt from the visitation of justice. They pleaded in no tribunal, except where their own order were the judges. Besides occasional benefactions, they derived a great revenue from their odes, elegies, and eulogiums. In early times the laws, the history, and the sciences were conveyed through the medium of verse; and the Bard was at once a poet, a legislator, a historian, and an artist. They always accompanied their chiefs to battle, to

Iberians, from the borders of the Euxine and Caspian seas, settled in Spain.

II.

* A colony of Spaniards, by the name of Scots, or Scythians, settled in Ireland, in the fourth age of the world.

III.

† The Phœnicians, who first introduced letters and arts into Europe, had an early commerce with the Iberian Spaniards.

IV.

‡ Nil, Belus, Sihor, Osihor, Thoth, Ogmius, &c. were Egyptian warriors, who filled the world with the fame of their exploits.

V.

§ The Egyptian conqueror of Spain got the emphatic name of the hero, or Hercules.

VI.

|| Nil, Sichor, Osichor, &c. succeeded to the Phœnicians, in cultivating and instructing several nations.

VII.

¶ In the days of the first Hercules, or Egyptian conqueror of Spain, a great drought parched up several countries.

These striking coincidences must give additional strength of probability to our historic structure, for surely the most incredulous will allow, that they could never be traced in the fairy ground of fable; because even if it were argued that those ancient writers on

ing originally on the Euxine sea; were expelled their country; and, after various adventures, settled ultimately in Spain.

II.

* Kinea *Scuit* (the Scots) and the posterity of Eber Scot (Iberian Scythians) were a colony of Spaniards who settled in Ireland, about a thousand years before Christ.

III.

† The ancient Iberian Scots learned the use of letters from a celebrated Phœnius, from whom they took the name of *Phæuii*, or Phœnicians.

IV.

‡ Niul, Bileus, Sru, Asru, Tat, and Ogaman, were mighty in Egypt and several other countries.

V.

§ A great hero, famous in Egypt, obtained the name of Golambh and *Milea-Espaine*, i. e. the hero of Spain.

VI.

|| Niul, Sru, Asru, &c. succeeded to Phœnius, in teaching the use of arts and letters.

VII.

¶ The conquest of Spain, together with draught, forced the Iberian Scuits, or Scots, to fly into Ireland.

animate them with song in the height of the engagement, and bear witness to their deeds, in order that they might be recorded.

* Vide *Newton Chronol.* Dublin ed. p. 10 Buchan. *Rer. Scotie.*

† *Strabo, Lib. 3. Universal History.*

‡ *Newton Chron.*

§ *Ibid.*

|| *Id. passim.*

¶ *Id. pp. 98, 231.*

* *Leb. Gab. Ogygia. O'Flynn.*

† *Leabar Gab. Keating. Lynch.*

Psalter of Cashel. Ogygia.

‡ *Leabar Gab.*

§ *Ibid. et omnes nostri.*

|| *Leb. Gab. Keating. O'Flaherty.*

Psalter of Cashel.

¶ *Ogygia. Regan. Book of Tara.*

the continent, whose historic details have been found to coincide with those of our *Fileas*, were themselves only fabulists and compilers of fiction, yet still, it will not also be asserted, that those imaginary events which they recorded should, from mere chance, happen to be the same with those said to be invented by our ancient bards. Macpherson, and the Irish apostate, LEDWICH, charge our annalists with the invention of historical falsehoods, in order to impose them on posterity as historical truths; while their own spurious statements, like blasted oaks, are rotting and decaying by the corroding fingers and cankering excrescence of their dreamy, fictitious, and puerile romance. What have they advanced for history, but unauthenticated fables, a tangled tissue of improbability, in which no intelligent or acute reader can discover the warp and woof of truth? But their fabrications have been dissolved; for every dispassionate man will admit, that they and the arch hypocrite, Hume, under the guise of pretended liberality and assumed candor, have sacrificed historical truth and justice to court the favor of English patronage and promote the despotic views of English policy. Happily, the ignorance of these historians has been as easily detected and exposed, as the baseness of their motives has been made manifest; for though our annals are impressed with the strongest characters of fiction, yet it is undeniable that there are also the strongest evidences of their high antiquity. To relate an event simply as it happened is the part of the philosophic historian;—to detract from the virtue, the generosity, the magnanimity of mind, that produced it, is reserved for the interested historifying politician, who, in almost all his reasonings, abstracts himself from the impulses and sympathies that enter into the noblest elements of human nature; but exaggeration is the lofty, though faulty privilege, not only of the patriotic historian and genealogical *Seanca*,* but more particularly of the enraptured Bard, who identifies himself with all the interests of humanity,—who feels those very emotions and passions which he so ardently describes,—whose fervid bosom glows with that refined generosity, that tender sensibility, that heroic notion of an exalted spirit, which characterize his heroes; and who in a word, can find nothing so sublimated in the nature of man, nor conceive any thing so romantic in the ardor of his affections, of which he did not believe himself capable. In describing, therefore, the exploits of his ancestors, the Irish bard could not easily resist those mingled emotions of patriotic enthusiasm and military renown, that led him to attribute the actions of others to the same greatness of soul, and soaring of ambition that would have produced them in himself. He knew, nay, he *felt* that he was not writing the history of a cold, calculating, and mercenary people, who are never prompted to those achievements that dignify the historic page; and who are alone actuated by the probable consequences that result from action; not by that noble daring—those high and sublime sentiments of heroism and of virtue, which contemplate only the motives that should induce to, and not the dangers that may await on chivalric actions. Neither

* *The genealogical Antiquarian Storyteller.*

are we to be surprised if many exploits, that appear incredible to the pyrrhonism of the laggard philosophy that prevails at the present era, should in those days of chivalric bravery, not only be attempted with confidence, but executed with success.

CHAPTER VII.

The Milesians establish their government on the basis of justice and wisdom in Ireland. Their beneficial institutions and judicious polity. Partition of Ireland by Heber and Heremon. Discord and dissension caused by the wife of Heber; the fatal results that ensue. Death of Heber in an engagement with his brother. Heremon sole monarch of Ireland—he successively defeats Caicer, Amhergin, Un and Vighe—the arrival of the Picts—their plans and intrigues discovered, and frustrated: alliance between them and Heremon—ultimately the invaders settle in North Britain. Death and character of Heremon, the great founder of the O’Neil dynasty.

THE last decisive victory secured the Milesians the sovereignty of the kingdom of Ireland. Having nothing now to apprehend from foreign, or internal enemies, HEBER and HEREMON began to organize, in conjunction with their Druidical brother Amhergin, a code of laws for the government of their people. The legislative enactments of these conquerors were dictated by a spirit of equitable justice, and enlightened policy, towards the conquered natives, that impresses us with a high sense of their wisdom and prudence. After concurring in the extent of sovereign power that each brother should assume and sway in the executive administration of their realms, they proceeded to make a division of the kingdom.

In arranging this partition, Heber and Heremon paid particular regard to the suggestions and decision of Amhergin, the High Priest. Our annalists do not accord in their detail of the particular territories allotted to each of these Princes. Dr. Keating informs us, that some learned antiquarians assign the northern part from the river Boyne* and *Scuibh* to Heremon, and thence southward to the Ocean, to Heber.

* The Boyne, a noble and romantic river, rises in the King’s County, and after a devious course winds its tributary streams into the sea at Drogheda. Its banks are adorned with the towns of Trim, Navan, Slane and Drogheda, Longwood, Edenderry and Kinnegad, the latter in the country of West Meath.

The battle between James II. and William III. fought at Old Bridge, near Drogheda, on the banks of this river in 1690, has given immortal celebrity to the Boyne. The Doric Obelisk, erected in 1736, to commemorate a victory lost by the imbecility of James, and won by the foreign mercenaries of the Dutch Usurper, is a grand and imposing pillar, which towers to the elevation of 150 feet. The inscriptions on the four sides, record the event of the victory and the deeds of Schomberg and the other chiefs of William’s army. In 1821, we were one, among the countless multitude, that followed the late George IV. King of England to Old Bridge. His Majesty did not alight from his carriage on that occasion, to view the obelisk, but the Marquis Conyngham pointed out to him the spot where Schomberg was killed in the river, and the positions which the hostile armies occupied on its right and left banks. June 1835.

Rejecting, however, this alleged division, he adduces other authorities that assert the two provinces of Munster were appropriated to the possession of Heber, while Leicester and Connaught formed the dominions of Heremon; and to *Eimher*, the son of their brother Ir, was given as a patrimonial territory, the entire province of Ulster. O'Flaherty and M'Geoghegan endeavor to sustain the correctness of Keating's partition; but Dr. O'Halloran, who seems to have made more accurate and profound inquiries than either of these historians, states, that Heber, as being the eldest brother, chose the southern part, a line of division being drawn from the Bay of Galway to the Bay of Dublin, by which Leinster and Munster fell to his share, while the house of Heremon enjoyed for its portion of the distribution, the provinces of Ulster and Connaught. This bears the evident marks of truth, and subsequent facts establish its accuracy on a solid foundation of probability. For whenever the house of Heber was deprived by the branches of the Heremonian Dynasty of the Monarchy, it contended for the original partition—a partition whose limits were subsequently defined, and acknowledged by the faith of a solemn treaty made A. D. 156, between Con, “of the hundred battles,” and Eogan-more, Monarch of Ireland. By the terms of this treaty, the southern provinces of Ireland were denominated “*Leat-Mogha*,” and the northern “*Leat-Cuin*.”* The division of territories being finally adjusted to the satisfaction of both the brothers, their kindred and officers were rewarded with grants of land. To Eimher, the son of Ir, several territories were allotted, by his uncle Heremon, in Ulster. Heber also bestowed large tracts of land to Lughaidh, the son of Ith, in the counties of Cork and Kerry. These chiefs held their possessions, as feudatories to the ruling princes. This was the origin of the feudal system in Ireland. Each class of the subordinate dependents of these chiefs had land parcelled out to them, in the vicinage of the residence of the head of the sept, for which they were obliged to render military service to him when called upon. The two brothers vied with each other in their endeavors to disseminate the blessings of a paternal government through the isle, and concord and affection seemed to cement together not only the hearts of the fond brothers, but those also of their devoted subjects. But this was like the calm that precedes the coming of the tempest. A contention arose between them that threatened disastrous results.

In appointing their retainers, who were to accompany them to their respective seats of government, each brother strenuously insisted on retaining in his service a Poet of great genius, and a Musician so eminently skilled in his soul-touching art as to rival Orpheus himself.

Heber maintained that without the inspiring stanzas of *Cir mac Nis* (as the Poet was called) the notes of O'Nai's harp would sound discordant in his ear; while Heremon on the other hand, declared he set his heart on the union of the rhyme of the Poet, and the dulcet melody of the harper. Both were obstinately determined to

* *Leat*, in Irish, signifies half, or share.

possess the sons of song, and their strife was on the point of the most fatal consequences, when Amhergin, the arch-Druid prevailed on them to submit their difference to his mediation.

He cast lots by which Heber gained the Musician, and Heremon, the Bard. In consequence of this distribution an impression long prevailed in the popular traditions of Ireland, that Ulster excelled in poetry, and Munster in music.* This, indeed, is an instance of that early protection with which poetry and music were fostered by the literary Milesians. Nor were these the only arts that received encouragement from the tutelary hand of regal patronage;—it also extended its shielding support to the sciences, agriculture, manufactures, and commerce. Twenty-four men, well versed in agriculture were appointed to reclaim twenty-four tracts of land, that, probably, lay uncultivated since the creation. To such readers as view with secret satisfaction the simplest affairs of antiquity, the names of these agriculturists may not be uninteresting, as the portions of land which they cultivated still bear the names, of their improvers, for posterity. These men, whom Swift would eulogize above all Philoso-

* On this subject an old Irish Poet bestows the following stanzas :—

“The learned Princes, Heber and Heremon
Contended which should, with the Poet’s art
And the Musician’s skill be entertained—
They cast the lots; the northern Prince enjoyed
The pleasing charms of poetry; and Heber
With music first his southern subjects blessed.
From hence the generous Irish, with rewards,
Did bountifully crown the Poet’s skill,
And music flourished in the southern coasts.”

Cambrensis, who was one of our earliest libellers, was still obliged to admit the perfection of the Irish in music. After he had heard the minstrels who attended the Irish chieftains at a banquet given to them in Dublin by Henry II. he wrote to one of his friends in England as follows: “Of all nations within our knowledge, this is, beyond comparison, the chief in musical composition.” When the celebrated Italian composer, Geminiani heard some of our pathetic airs in London, he exclaimed, “Ha! that is the music of a people that lost their liberty! I have heard nothing so sweet and plaintive, and of such an original turn on this side of the Alps.” The celebrated Handel declared often, that “he would rather be the author of O’Daly’s ‘*Ellen Aroon*’ than of all his own compositions.”

“Military music made part of the studies of the Irish Warriors. It filled them with courage, and a contempt of danger; and it was by the help of the military song they sounded the charge, rally, retreat, &c. Their great proficients in the art were called *Coradhs*, (or masters).”—*Vide O’Connor’s Dissert.*

“In the sixth century the Britons and Welsh studied music under the Irish professors, in the College of Armagh, which was then so renowned a University, that it was called the “*great school of the west*” of Europe.”—*Vide Warton’s History of English Poetry.*

“At this time, says Magnesium, (Apology, page 112,) there were no less than seven thousand matriculated students in the University of Armagh.”

“No nation can be found in any part of the world more skilled in music than were the ancient Irish.”—*Ward’s Diss. on History, page 271.*

“The Irish Historians contend that their country is the celebrated Hyperborean Isle, and that music is the native production of the soil, and in support of this pretension they quote the following passage from DIODORAS SICULUS. ‘ERIN is a large Island, little less than Sicily, lying opposite the *Celtæ*, and inhabited by the Hyperboreans. The country is fruitful and pleasant, dedicated to Apollo, and most of the people Priests or Songsters. In it is a large grove, and in this a temple of a round form, to which the Priests often resort with their harps to chaunt the praises of their god, Apollo.’”—WARNER.

phers, for raising millions of "Blades of grass, where none grew before," were called Aidhne, Ai, Asal, Meidhe, Morba, Meide, Cuibh, Cliu, Ceara, Reir, Slan, Leighe, Liffe, Line, Leighean, Tria, Dula, Adhar, Aire, Deisi, Dela, Fea, Fenihean, and Serabe. Fertility and improvement soon gave smiling charms to the aspect of the landscape, and Ceres and Pomona spread their bountiful donations over its valleys and mountains.

"The clearing of the land in this manner," says DR. WARNER, "gave rise to agriculture, whose vestiges are now to be seen in some of the most waste and uncultivated parts of the Island. If this does not afford a proof of the superior numbers, it is at least a proof of the superior industry of the ancient inhabitants over the present; and though the old Milesians had an invincible prejudice against mechanical handicraft occupations, which were carried on by the remaining Belgians or their slaves, yet that agriculture was in high repute and estimation." To these remarks of the English historian, it may be added that it is a remarkable feature in the history of our ancestors, that while several historical facts have been omitted, our antiquarians have sedulously transmitted to us the names of all those who encouraged agriculture, which, indeed, seems to have been more particularly attended to by the ancient Milesians, than those may be willing to allow, who connect the idea of ferocious independence to the feudal system of antiquity.

While Heber and Heremon were daily becoming more connected by the bonds of fraternal attachment, and reciprocal kindness, woman, that source of good and evil to man, severed the ties of affection and affinity, and threw down the apple of discord among the two brothers. They had scarcely reigned a year, when a rupture, resulting from the pride and ambition of Heber's wife, divided them by an abyss of enmity and malice. There happened to be three beautiful and picturesque vales, on the adjoining confines of their respective territories, two of which were in possession of Heber, who suffered weeds to luxuriate where nature intended flowers should flourish; while the third, which belonged to Heremon, was decorated by his tasteful queen with every embellishment of art that could improve nature.

This vale, in the decoration of which TEA, the wife of Heremon, took so much pleasure, was as pleasing and enchanting, if we credit our annalists, as the glen of Tempe, for its shady groves, floral bowers, meandering rivulets, hanging gardens, and gushing fountains of crystal water, rendered it an earthly elysium. Seated in one of these bowers, this lady often sang in concert with the minstrels of her palace, filling the air with music, with was redolent with the odorous breath of flowers. Such was the paradise that arose under the plastic hand of female taste: and such are the charms it can impart to the spontaneous productions of luxuriant nature. The loveliness of this vale excited the envy of Heber's queen, who insisted on possessing it also. Her husband, over whom she exercised unlimited sway, unable to resist the influence of the seductive blandishment of female entreaty, and perhaps, moved by the loftier views of ambition, insisted, in a haughty manner, that his brother Heremon should resign the vale.

TEA, however, a lady whose mental endowments were only equalled by her personal attractions, found no difficulty in persuading her spouse to refuse so unwarrantable and ungracious a demand. When the messenger returned to the Queen of Heber, and communicated the peremptory denial of her brother-in-law, she became enraged, and by the power of tears and supplications, she forced her husband to take up arms in her cause. A civil war was the immediate consequence. The two brothers, by mutual consent, led their forces to the plains of *Geisoil*,* in Leinster, where a desperate engagement took place. After a fierce and obstinate fight, Heber, with three of his commanders, and a great number of his bravest soldiers were slain. This victory put Heremon in the undivided possession of the Monarchy. Such are the fatal consequences that arise, frequently, from matters of trivial importance in their own abstract nature, but formidable when they become connected with the human passions. The shades of a thousand heroes must often traverse that undiscovered country, beyond the mortal continent, "from whose bourne no traveller returns," to satiate the whim of royalty, or the importunate cravings of a capricious individual.

HEREMON, after the death of his brother, was solemnly inaugurated on the *Liagh-Fail*, or stone of destiny, by the Druids, as sole Monarch of Ireland, A. M. 2737.

Having now no rival on the throne to disconcert his policy or interfere with his plans of government, he gave full scope to his predilections and wishes; but though his power was absolute, his acts were generally the offspring of conscientious conviction and acute discrimination.

He selected for his ministers men who were eminent for their learning and virtues, so that his administration soon healed the wounds of civil war, and diffused through the nation those blessings which can only emanate from a just and impartial government. It might be said that by this wise and prudent procedure he made the affections of his people the supporting pillars of his throne. Even the *Tuatha de Danans* and the *Fir-bolgs*, whom he had conquered and reduced to subjection, were so prepossessed by his conciliating manners and generous clemency as to become his warm adherents. He bestowed the government of Leinster on Criomthan, a legitimate descendant of the Belgic dynasty. The two provinces of Munster he conferred on Er, Orbha, Fearon, and Feargna, the sons of his brother Heber; and Eadas and Un, the sons of Vighe, two generals who signalized themselves by their valor in the late engagement, were deputed Viceroys of Connaught; and Heber, or Eimher, the son of his brother Ir, was raised to the station of Governor of Ulster. As soon as he had thus organized and consolidated a system of legislation and government for the security and safety of his dominions, he turned his thoughts to the internal improvement of his kingdom. He invited architects and sculptors from Greece, and

* Supposed to be the place now called Bellewstown, County of Meath, about five miles S. W. of Drogheda, and is famous for its annual races, and for being often selected as the Parade ground of the Irish volunteers in 1782.

began, A. M. 2738 to build, on an eminence overlooking the favorite vale of his wife, Tea, the magnificent palace of Tara, which for more than a thousand years afterwards was the regal residence of the Monarchs of Ireland. As we will have innumerable occasions to speak of the palace of Tara, in the course of our history, we will defer a description of its architecture and triennial parliaments until we bring down our narrative to the glorious reign of OLLAMH FODLA, A. M. 3083, which forms so triumphant an epoch in our annals.*

But neither the beneficence, nor clemency of Heremon could subdue the disaffection of some of his own kindred, who still looked upon him with an evil and an envious eye, since he overthrew his brother Heber. At the head of this insurgent faction, was Caicer, an officer whom the monarch loaded with favors and honors, but like some of the infamous marshals who betrayed the great minded Napoleon, he had a heart dead to the warm touch of gratitude and honor.

* HEREMON built the palace of Tara, in honor of his Queen Tea, from whom it derived the name of *Teemore*.

"It was an immense pile of wood, whose workmanship and architectural grandeur displayed the highest taste of Grecian art."—NICHOLSON.

"In the early ages, Britain had to resort to Ireland for artists, and materials for building. The massy colonnades, that adorn the porticoes of Tara's royal palace, were composed of Irish oak, and so embellished by carving and gilding as to look more magnificent than the most finished peristyles of Grecian sculpture."—CAMPION.

"The Milesian buildings, though composed of wood, were more elegant, more sumptuous, extensive, and more beautiful to the eye than those erected of stone, on account of the various engravings in relief, paintings, and the fine volutes that adorned the columns, sculptured from ponderous trees of oak. On this account the workmen and artists of Ireland have been often induced to abandon their own country and repair to Britain, where they raised many heathen temples before the introduction of Christianity."—WARD.

"It appears that CORMAC, the renowned Monarch of Ireland, A. D. 254, rebuilt the palace of Tara of marble, on an enlarged scale of grandeur. We may form some idea of its magnitude when we are told that it was five hundred feet in length, and ninety-five in breadth, and sixty high. It was adorned with thirty porticoes. In the middle of the state-room hung a lantern of prodigious size, studded with 300 lamps; and the lodging apartments were furnished with a hundred and fifty beds, and the hospitable tables always spread with delicious fare for 1500 guests who daily partook of the royal banquet.

"There were three side-boards covered with golden and silver goblets, and the king was waited upon at table by a hundred and fifty of the most distinguished champions in the kingdom.

"The household troops, who were in constant duty, consisted of 1050 of the flower of the Irish army."—WARNER.

"Our Milesian ancestors built for use, not for ostentation. They built their houses of timber, as several nations of Europe have done, and as some do to this day. The ancient Irish did not conceive that real magnificence consisted in rearing great heaps of stone, artfully disposed, and closely cemented; or that real grandeur received any diminution from the humility of its habitation. They brought dignity to the place; they sought none from it;—and thus judged all the Celtic nations, until the Roman conquests changed their manners, and made them yield to Roman customs."—O'CONNOR.

"Tara was once a stately palace as its ruins showeth to-day. It stood on a lofty hill in Meath, which commands a most goodly prospect. The valleys are fertile and beautiful. In this palace the countrie had their meetings of provincial kings, senators, and poets."—HOLINSHED'S CHRONICLE.

The king incensed to madness, collected his forces and soon destroyed the adherents of the traitor, who fell himself a victim to his baseness and ingratitude. In the course of a year after the suppression of Caicer's insurrection, the arch-Druid, Amhergin, regardless at once of fraternal affection and the injunctions of moral obligation, gave himself up to the influence of jealous passions, and ambitious aspirations, by stirring up a revolt against the king his brother. Placing himself at the head of his rebel legion he marched towards Tara, but the Monarch soon arrested his progress by attacking him at Skreen, a small village about three miles from Tara, where he routed his troops and slew himself.* Shortly after this revolt had been quelled, the king was again obliged to resist the defection of Un and Vighe, who were also defeated and slain.

The battle in which these disaffected chiefs were killed, was fought in the plains of Comhrar in the County of Meath, where a Rath, or mound of earth, to this day, gives "a local habitation and a name," to the scene of their fight and sepulture. The arrival of the Picts, at this era, is a memorable event in our annals. Of these adventurers, King Cormac, in the psalter of Cashel, gives us a circumstantial narrative. Bede, the venerable sire of English annalists, also, in his ecclesiastical history, notices the descent of the Picts on Ireland, which brings a collateral proof to sustain the unshaken truths set forth by the regal Prelate of Cashel.

The Picts, as the royal historian informs us, were engaged in the service of Policornus, king of Thrace, an effeminate Prince, who formed a design of violating the chastity of their general's daughter, a virgin of the most exquisite beauty. But her father, and a man of the nicest feelings of honor, with a mind sensitively alive to the foul disgrace intended his darling child, resolved to save her from contamination, even at the risk of his own life. Making known the criminal designs of the king, to some of his friends, they felt so strong a sympathy in his cause, that they assisted him to despatch the libidinous tyrant in his own palace. As soon as this deed was accomplished, they fled the country to evade punishment.

They travelled, we are told, through the dominions of several Princes until they reached France, whose king, on hearing the cause of their flight from their own country, took them into his service, and assigned them lands, on which they built a city, from thence called Pictavium, now Poitiers. The French Monarch,

* SKREEN, sometimes written *Skryne*, gives name to a Barony in the County of Meath, and is now envired by as charming and magnificent scenery as can be found in Ireland. It was bestowed by Henry II. on one of his Knights called De Feipo, whose descendants possessed its Lordships until the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Adam De Feipo erected a strong castle here in the twelfth century, the ruins of which are still standing, as mementos of its past feudal glory. Sir J. Ware tells us, that Francis De Feipo erected a large and stately abbey here, for Augustin Hermit, early in the reign of Edward III. of England. Some of the architectivie relics of that religious edifice still exist to attest its pristine consequence. Skreen, distant about twenty miles from Dublin, can now only show the parish church, rebuilt in 1827, and a few humble houses, as indications of its former ecclesiastical and feudal importance. On every side of it are lordly mansions, and ornamented domains, beautified with all the embellishments that landscape gardening can bestow.

led, no doubt, by curiosity, paid a visit to the young damsel, whose captivating charms had the same effect on his heart as they produced on that of the Thracian king: but the chaste lady took an early opportunity of apprising her father of the passion of the French Monarch, conjuring him, at the same time, to remove her from the influence of that regal contagion which threatened death to her virtue.

As soon as he heard this, he again formed the determination of flying from the danger that menaced his daughter's honor. Thus resolved, he and his friends seized upon a portion of the French fleet, with which they hastily put to sea, and succeeded, after a favorable voyage, in gaining the Irish coast. They landed at Wexford, but in their course thither lost the beauteous fair one, who was the sole cause of all their wanderings and solicitude. Her dread of dishonor, and the intense anxiety which perturbed her heart, preyed so much upon her spirits as to produce a rapid consumption, which hurried her to a watery grave, in the sixteenth year of her age. The Picts being brave soldiers, enlisted themselves under the banner of HEREMON, with whom, in conjunction with his own troops, he attacked a predatory expedition of British invaders, who had just landed in his dominions, and succeeded in totally defeating them at the battle of Ard-Leamhnachta, in Munster. The Picts were emboldened by the services which they rendered Heremon on this occasion, to solicit, confidently, an asylum from him in his kingdom. But even at this early age, the Island was so thickly inhabited that the monarch, though willing, found himself unable to grant their request. The Picts, however, were determined to effect by treachery what they could not obtain by entreaty. They conspired, and entered into a collusion with the disgraced Damnonii, which was conducted with the utmost secrecy. But how seldom do those brooding schemes of treason, that are not generated by virtuous liberty, for the annihilation of despotism, terminate in success?

That coalition, which is founded on the basis of injustice and ingratitude, can never rise to the summit of honorable independence. Every member of such an unhallowed conspiracy as this, where ingratitude paralyzes courage and mars resolution, wishes to stand as high as his compeers in the dishonorable list that registers his disgrace; and if he be disappointed in his expectations, it is justly to be apprehended that he will give publicity to those intrigues, and machinations, in which he could not be a leader. If he be destitute of principle and honor, he will satiate his revenge by the punishment of his associates; and if he be actuated by the generous control of virtue and of religion, the ennobling impulse, which these salutary feelings awaken in the mind, will precipitate him from the flagrant faith of a league, whose secrecy is treason of the blackest dye, because the offspring of ingratitude, and convince him ere he proceeds too far in the iniquitous career, that to sacrifice the interest of a few, for the welfare of the many, is an imperative and sacred duty which he owes to his country, and the invoking behest of religious obligation. Our historians do not indeed distinctly inform

us how the intrigues of the Picts were first discovered : certain it is, however, that Heremon received timely notice of their concerted designs to subvert his government, and took, accordingly, the promptest measures to crush the unorganized embryo of sedition. Baffled in their treasonable projects, and sensible of the danger to which they were exposed, the Picts quickly sued for peace in the most supplicating manner. Heremon, whose magnanimity was equal to his valor, conquered his just resentment, and yielded to their entreaties. At their own urgent request he permitted them to go over to North Britain, where they proposed to make a settlement which should be ever after subject to the Irish crown. In process of time, as we shall relate in its proper place, this colony rose to such a warlike magnitude of power as became formidable, not only to the Britons, but even to the Romans. To attest the sincerity of their intentions, and to afford a guarantee for the faithful observance of their engagements, they solicited the monarch for permission to form matrimonial alliances with Irish women, pledging themselves that their children alone, should be only entitled to succeed to their inheritance. To this stipulation the king adhered, and from the period of its ratification, to the days of *St. Colum-Kille*, the Irish Apostle of Scotland, the Caledonians were tributary to Ireland. As soon as the king's consent was obtained, the temple of Hymen was crowded with votaries. All the chiefs and soldiers of the Picts married Irish females. Some modern writers are of opinion that the arrival of the Picts in Ireland must have been later than the epoch fixed by our historians. They imagine that population could not have increased to such a degree as to render it necessary to exclude the Picts from a settlement in the Island ; but if with our annalists we admit that the kingdom was inhabited 300 years after the flood, it must have received a great accumulation of inhabitants during a space of 790 years, especially when we consider that for a considerable time after the flood, the age of man was extended to 400 years, and that *Shem* the son of Noah, lived upwards of 200 years after the birth of Abraham, who was the tenth in descent from the builder of the ark. It is not, however, necessary to have recourse to the probability of the existence of an immense population, in order to account for the policy that dictated the exclusion of the Picts from our country. It is only reasonable to suppose that a great part of the Island was in those days covered with woods and morasses ; and we should not be surprised, if those portions which were reclaimed, and cultivated by tillage, probably with much difficulty, from the wild growth of ages, should be numerously inhabited.

We are informed that the Brigantes, or Clana-Breogum, also obtained permission from Heremon to pass over to Britain, and that they settled in Cumberland, or the country of hills and valleys, from which they received, in common with the Welsh, the appellation of Cumeri. The authority of the venerable Bede bears out, triumphantly, the accuracy of the truth of this emigration. For he asserts that the languages of South Britain, were the British and Saxon, in

his own days, (the seventh century) and that the Irish was the common dialect of the Caledonians and Hibernians.*

HEREMON, who eminently united the skill of the general, the bravery of the hero, and the wisdom of the sage, to the profound knowledge of the statesman, was removed by death from the scene of his glory and usefulness, shortly after the departure of the Picts. He left his throne to his three sons, MUIMHNE, LUIGHNL, and LAISHNE, of whom we shall speak in the next chapter. Heremon possessed, in a high degree, all those virtues that give dignity to a monarch, and reflect lustre on the diadem of royalty. Of his talents as an accomplished general, we must form a respectable opinion from the invariable success that attended his arms. His reign was disturbed by the restless and ambitious views of his own commanders, whom gratitude should have made his firm and devoted friends. His brother Amhergin also made unjust pretensions, in the assertion of which he lost his life. He would have probably experienced serious disturbance from the Picts, also, if the efficient measures which he adopted to thwart their seditious designs on his life and kingdom, had been less prudent than his vigilance was active in discovering them. His moral character has almost as great a claim on our admiration as his military career; for the splendor of his victories were never dimmed by cruelty or revenge. It is true he made war upon his brother; but it was a war to which he was forced by necessity and self-defence, it was the dernier expedient resorted to for the protection of his life and dominions.

We have seen that the access of power which he derived from victory was again transferred to the family from which it was wrested; for actuated with that exalted spirit of generosity, which so eminently distinguished him, he bestowed the principalities of the two Munsters on the sons of his brother Heber. This magnanimous spirit, which soared above the impure atmosphere of revenge and the crawling littleness of petty oppression, seemed so have been transmigrated into the souls of his illustrious descendants, the chivalric Hy-Nials,

* "Mr. Macpherson, (the only OSSIAN the Scots can now pretend to,) as great a dreamer in etymologies as in history, affirms that Bede, and all our old writers on this subject, are mistaken, and that the Picts spoke not only the same language with the Milesians, but were the same nation, under different appellations. But what authority has he for this? His own, and his own only, against all the old accounts we ever had of the Pictic nation! Eumenius, a writer of the third century, and Claudian a writer of the fourth century, make the Picts and Scots, (i. e. the ancient Irish) two different and distinct nations; so do all ancient and modern antiquaries, from Nennius, who lived in the ninth century, to Primate Usher, who flourished in the seventeenth. But the second-sighted Mr. Macpherson deposes against them all on his own bare authority!"—DISSERT. ON IRISH HISTORY.

"The Irish is the only nation in Europe, which is not indebted to the Romans for language and letters. Indeed their GADELIC or Celtic dialects approaches nearer the original language of the Patriarchs, Gomer and Japheth, than any other spoken. There is no doubt but the Scotch and Welsh borrowed their language from the Irish when they were colonies of Ireland."—LUHID'S ORIGIN OF LANGUAGE.

"The Irish language appears to have been familiar to the Gauls and Carthaginians, before the Christian era. Its idiom is soft and harmonious, so that like the Italian it is well adapted to give expression to grief and the gentler passions of our nature."—CAMDEN.

or O'Niels, whose noble achievements and heroic virtues, reflect glory on the annals, and renown of our country.

NIAL, the celebrated hero of the nine hostages,* who compelled Scotland to renounce her ancient name of "*Albania*," and assume that of *Scota* minor, in the fifth century, was the great progenitor of this family, and the lineal representative descendant of Heremon, the son of Milesius. In due time we shall give a genealogy of the northern and southern Hy-Nials.

CHAPTER VIII.

The three sons of Heremon, MUIMHNE, LUIGHNE, and LAISHNE, agree to sway the sceptre of sovereignty alternately. The concord and fraternal affection which distinguished their reigns. LAISHNE is opposed by the sons of his uncle, Heber: the success of their revolt: they gain possession of the throne, from which they are soon expelled by Irial, the son of Heremon. The reign of Irial—his institutions and victories:—his successor, EITHRIAL, who is dethroned. CONMAOL, the son of Heber ascends the throne, of which he is in his turn dispossessed by TIGHERNMAS, of the Heremonian line. The government of this Prince; his sumptuary laws, and regulations for the distinction of colour; his encouragement of arts and manufactures; his adoration of an idol. The origin and progress of the Irish Druids. A. M. 2750.

THE three sons of HEREMON, MUIMHNE, LUIGHNE, and LAISHNE, religiously obeying the dying injunctions of their royal father, and profiting by their experience of the disaster which civil dissension brought upon their house, unanimously agreed before their brother Irial, the arch-druid and prophet, to sway the sovereign authority successively a year each. This compact being solemnly confirmed and ratified, MUIMHNE, the eldest brother, was invested with the royal insignia, and on the termination of his year, his next brother, LUIGHNE, ascended the throne. During his year of administration, MUIMHNE died at his country palace, in Connaught, an event which was deeply lamented by his brothers, who loved and esteemed him for his valor, and the many amiable qualities that adorned his mind.

As soon as the period of LAISHNE's turn to assume the prerogatives and duties of royalty arrived, he mounted the throne; but scarce had the ceremonies of his inauguration been ended, than his cousins, the sons of Heber, revolted, and raising their insurrectionary standard, it was quickly joined by numerous adherents, at whose head the disaffected chiefs marched to the very gates of the royal palace.

The monarch and his brother made formidable preparations to resist the assault of rebellion. An engagement soon ensued at *Ard-Ladhran*, in the county of Wexford, which ended in the death of

* "He was called the "*hero of the nine hostages*," because he compelled nine nations to send him hostages. No Monarch carried the glory of the Irish arms farther than Nial. He drove the Romans out of Caledonia, and pursued them to the banks of the Loire in Gaul."—HUTCHINSON.

the monarch and his brother, as well as in the discomfiture of their army. The rays of fortune once more illuminated the clouded prospects of the house of Heber; but how seldom is the sunshine of that prosperity which is gained by unjust conquest, unobscured by the mists of vicissitude. The power which is wrested by ambition's physical force, is generally of an instable and precarious tenure. The victors enjoyed the kingdom but one year, or, according to some authorities, only three months, when they were attacked and defeated by IRIAL, the prophet who was appointed high priest by his father, Heremon, on the death of the arch-druid Ambergin. Our annals say nothing particular of the short and unfortunate reign of the sons of Heber. The victorious prophet mounted the throne by the general consent of the Irish people, who expected much from the prudence, wisdom and clemency, which were the distinguishing traits of his character. His administration proved that the national hopes were well founded. The abuses which corrupted the government of his predecessors, were removed by the salutary reform that he introduced; and justice and impartiality swayed his councils, and produced in consequence the happiest results. His reign shed lustre on the nation. He raised several stately edifices, both military and religious, extended the commerce, and materially improved the agriculture of the country. After he had crushed internal sedition, he was subsequently obliged to repel the attack of a numerous band of African invaders, who made a descent upon the southern coast. In his first battle with the invading foe, at *Teanmhuighe*,* in Fingall, in the county of Dublin, he totally defeated them, and killed with his own hand their chief commander, *Eiechtghe*. After a glorious reign of ten years, he died, and was succeeded by his son EITHRIAL, A. M. 2765. This young prince inherited the genius, and imbibed the principles of his royal father, whose dying entreaties, he religiously observed as the rules of his conduct and government. Our historians characterize him as a sage and a hero. Having no domestic, or foreign enemy to annoy him, he devoted the beginning of his reign to the cultivation of letters and the arts. Under his paternal government, the benign blessings of peace diffused happiness and prosperity through Ireland. EITHRIAL wrote the history of his ancestors, from the great Phenius down to his own days. According to Colgan and Molloy, this work of our royal historian existed in the archives of Tara, until St. Patrick, in the too ardent glow of his Christian zeal, committed it to the flames with the rest of our antique works.

O'Halloran conjectures that this prince sent an Hyperborean Scythian embassy, at the head of which was Albaris, to Athens: "That such an embassy," says our Livy, "arrived in Greece, cannot be doubted. It was a wise measure, to renew friendship,

* Now called SKERRIES, a little fishing town, on the sea coast, in the barony of Balruddery, County of Dublin, at the distance of 17 miles, N. E. of the metropolis. The village itself is inconsiderable; but it deserves some importance from its harbor, and the beauty and grandeur of the domains in its vicinity. There is not much historic association connected with Skerries, excepting the invasion mentioned in the text, and the landing of Sir Henry Sydney, Queen Elizabeth's Lord Deputy of Ireland, at this port, on the 12th September, 1575.

extend commerce, and the glory of his people, not only there, but in Asia; and this will explain why the memory of these transactions were preserved even in Egypt, in the days of Solon.”* Although Eithrial might be emphatically pronounced the father of his people; but still, as virtue and generosity cannot avert the malice of treason, his cousin CONMAOL, the youngest son of Heber, formed a conspiracy against this good king, by which he lost his crown and life, in the twentieth year of his reign, in the battle of Rahonen, in Leinster.

The fallen monarch having no issue, his conqueror found no impediments obstructing his way to the throne, and victory threw a lustre over the darkness of his ingratitude. He was solemnly inaugurated on the stone of destiny, by a full convocation of the Druids and the states of the kingdom. The Psalter of Cashel represents him in the most brilliant light of eulogium. The royal historian attributes to him all those virtues that give additional splendor to regal station. “He it was,” says the venerable Cormac, “that killed with his own hand Eithrial, the son of Irial, the prophet, in revenge for the blood of his father. He it was that fought and won forty-five battles against the posterity of Heremon, he it was whom victory followed as his shadow, and whose arms were always crowned with glory and conquest.” We have no doubt but he was brave and intrepid, for he quelled several insurrections, vanquished the Erneans and Martineans, the remains of the ancient *Belgæ*, in several engagements; until at length his hour coming, he fell by the sword of Heber, in the battle of Aonach Macha, in Meath, after a reign of thirty years. “His burial place,” says O’Halloran, “yet goes by the name of *Fear-Connmaol*,” or the grave of the “Prince of Chiefs.”

His death again gave the reins of government into the hands of the Heremonian dynasty. TIGHERNMAS, the son of Follam, the son of Eithrial, the son of Irial, the prophet, the son of Heremon, was saluted supreme monarch. As a warrior and a statesman, he early gave decisive proofs of his abilities. By his valor in the field, he defeated the insurrectionary armies of the Heberians in twenty-seven pitched battles; and by his liberal and sagacious policy in the cabinet, he at once endeared himself to his friends, and extorted the respect of his enemies. He attained a higher eminence of popularity than any of his predecessors since the reign of Heremon. Finding himself thus too exalted to be disturbed by the intrigues of the partizans of the Heberian family, he devoted his whole attention to the promotion of national happiness. Literature, arts, and agriculture, flourished under his fostering auspices, and a new spirit seemed to have animated the kingdom, while the genius of the sovereign manifested itself in the general prosperity which prevailed.

* We should give some degree of belief and credit to the investigations of our antiquarians, which prove, that *Aeria* and *Ogygia* were given in common to Egypt and Ireland; and to that other most ancient and universally allowed tradition of our historians, of the marriage of *Scota*, the daughter of Pharaoh, with a predecessor of the Scots; which evidently convinces us, that there had been a commerce, and an alliance of a very ancient date, carried on, and mutually maintained between the Egyptians and our Iberian ancestors.—O’FLAHERTY.

The reign of this monarch is very much celebrated by our bards and historians, as the code of laws that were enacted in it have formed a conspicuous epoch of Irish history. His ordinances relative to THE COLOURS of the garments worn by princes, nobles, bards, and peasants, deserve particular illustration from the historian.

By this legislative enactment, which our annalists call the LAW OF COLOURS,* princes of the blood royal were allowed to have seven

* This law did more towards gaining esteem and respect than all the golden trappings of the East, and yet cost nothing. It produced a noble emulation among men of letters, who on approving themselves skilled in the *Filacht*, i. e. the arts and sciences of the land, received the vesture of six colours.

The dress of the ancient *Scots* (the Irish) was plain as their manners. The great were apparelled in much the same manner as the lower ranks, allowing only for the fineness of the texture, and the variety, or rather number, of the colours.

The fashion of this vesture was so admirably adapted to the manners of a martial nation, that it received very little change through all ages. It helped to display action, and exhibited the actor in the most advantageous manner. It bears a perfect resemblance to the costume of the ancient Greeks. One piece covered the legs and thighs of the wearer closely. The *Braccon*, or vest, was fastened with golden clasps, and so conveniently contrived, as to cover the breast better than any modern garment, while the close sleeves of a flowing mantle gave the soldier all the advantages he could require in the use of arms. Over the whole, they wore a *Fallung*, or wide cloak, which covered them from the sun and rain in time of inaction, as in time of war it served them for a bed to repose on in their field tents. I have seen a representation of these dresses, in the carving on the king of Connaught's (Feidlim O'Connor) tomb, in the abbey of Roscommon; and I am certain that the remains of this species of dress are still preserved in the highlands of Scotland."—O'CONNOR.

"Though the garb of the ancient Irish was simple in its fashion, yet the materials of which it was composed were of the most costly quality. Their kings wore mantles of an immense size, generally nine ells of yellow and purple silk, which were studded with gems and precious stones. Their helmets, shields, and ensign staffs, were of pure gold, as the country abounded with that precious metal."—VALLANCEY.

"The military dress of the ancient Irish was fashioned after the vesture of the Grecian heroes, and perfectly corresponded with the drapery which we see in the pictures of the old masters."—Vide *Scottish Archaeologia*, vol. ix.

"The Irish kings, in battle, wore a golden crown on their heads, and a star of amethyst on their breasts; as it was deemed inglorious to conceal their rank in a garb unbecoming their high stations."—PINKERTON'S *Inquiry into the History of Scotland*.

"In the pagan ages, the Irish soldiers never made use of coats of mail; the shield alone was all their defensive armor for the body; their chief offensive weapons were the sword, javelin, and arrow. Their infantry, after the Christian era, were of two orders, heavy and light-armed: the first were called *Galloglachs*, (i. e. heavy armed soldiers) armed with a highly burnished helmet and coat of mail, bound with iron rings. They were also girded with long swords, and occasionally, they fought with a most keen battle-axe. Their light-armed infantry (called *Keherns*) fought with bearded javelins and short daggers."—*Dissert. on Irish History*.

"The Irish soldiers looketh very warlike, and their dress resembleth the ancient Grecian vesture. They are tall and masculine, with fierce visages; they have three kinds of weapons in use; short bright lances, two javelins, and broad battle-axes, extremely well-tempered. Against the force of these weapons, neither helmet nor cuirass is sufficient defence. I saw the Irish king's body guard in *Dubline*, and they resembleth a band of Giants, inasmuch as their stature and strength much surpasseth our soldiers."—CAMBERENSIS.

"O'Neil's guards which the Irish call *Galloglachs*, are certainly in appearance equal to the pictured representation of Cæsar's favorite legion, and their dress is superb and imposing."—*Sir Philip Sidney's letter to Queen Elizabeth*.

"The Irish soldiers are men of great stature, of more than ordinary strength of

colours in their garments; the monarch was always known by his mantle of yellow and purple, for green was not in those days the national colour; the vesture of the druids, ollamhs, bards, and artists, was variegated by six dies; that of the nobility and knights by five; of *beatachs*, or keepers of open houses, by four; of commanders of battalions, three; of private gentlemen, two; and of peasantry and soldiers, one. The provisions of these laws were observed, for ages, with the most inviolable sacredness and religious attention. "This custom of making," says O'Halloran, "various colors in clothes honorable, we find to be extremely ancient. Thus, we read in Genesis that 'Jacob loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age, and he made him a coat of many colors.' This same law we find established in China, from the most remote antiquity."

Indeed, we have the authority of foreign historians to say, that the ancient Irish carried the art of dyeing to Tyrian perfection; and their colours were as unfading as they were vivid and durable. These colours, we are told by Bishop Nicholson, were all of vegetable production. In Irish poetry, red, purple, and crimson robes are frequently mentioned; but yellow was the royal colour, and the livery of honour and pre-eminence. In consequence, the silks, stuffs, and linens of this die were brilliant in the extreme. The materials used in the composition of this colour were extracted from a plant well known in Ireland, called the *Buidh-more*, or great yellow, which is still an article of commerce. This imprinted a dye bright and lasting, which resisted at once the action of rain and sun-beams. The purple and crimson were obtained from a species of moss growing on rocks and stones in different parts of the kingdom, denominated by Nicholson, in his natural history, the "*Lichenoides Saxatile, tinctorium foliis purpureis*, and *Muscus tinctorius crustae, modo petris admascens* of Ray," called by our Irish botanists, *Corcair* and *Arcell*. The crimson was extracted from the corcair or finer kind, resembling a thin white scurf, which grows on sea-side rocks in every part of Ireland. Persons of rank dyed their garments in this effusion, and Ware says, that the secret of imparting such a beautiful crimson colour, in its original lustre was not known in his days to any person in Ireland. Great quantities of this moss are gathered in the county of Kerry, and sold to the dyers in London and Dublin, who prefer it to the orchil imported from the Canaries and Azores. The ancient Irish also produced from it and a mixture of a plant called the "*ladies' bed-straw*," or the Irish *Crow lean*, a beautiful gold, orange, and scarlet colour. The black colour, which distinguished the apparel of the peasantry, was composed of the juice of *bog mire* and white water lily, and the dye was so excellent and

limb, powerful swordsmen, but at the same time altogether sanguinary to us, (*Saxons*), and by no means inclined to give quarter. Their weapons are one foot in length, resembling double-edged hatchets, almost sharper than razors, fixed to shafts of more than ordinary length, with which, when they strike, they inflict a dreadful wound. Before any one is admitted into O'Neil's corps, he swears, in the most solemn manner, that he will never flinch, or turn his back when he comes into action."—*Stanhurst, de Reb. Hibern.* p. 41, 42.

glossy, that neither time nor weather could tarnish it as long as a piece of the cloth remained. There is an herb grows on the rocks of Magilligan, in the county of Derry, which, when properly prepared, produces the finest peach-blossom colour. In a word, it appears that our ancestors could produce all colours, except blue, from our native growth.* According to Nicholson, the ancient Irish ladies dyed linen of a beautiful bright crimson colour, which they made by a preparation of *cochleae*, a species of shell-fish that abounds on the coasts of Wicklow, Dublin, and Wexford. The extract taken from this shell-fish, when applied to the linen, produced first a fine sea-green, then an azure blue, afterwards a deep purple-red, and all in a few hours, when exposed to the sun. But after washing the cloth in hot water, and soap, the purple became an exquisite and brilliant crimson, which nothing could change. "The fish was," says Nicholson, in his natural history of Ireland, "a species of perriwinkles, which is still used in dyeing by the people of Wexford and Wicklow. The ancient Irish are said to have dyed much of this colour, which must have destroyed great quantities of the fish, as not above six or seven drops of liquid can be obtained from each winkle, and that by a difficult process: the shell is not to be broken, the vein lying transversely in a furrow next the head is to be pierced by a bodkin, when a few drops of white milky liquor issues. The Tyrian die, so much celebrated by antiquity, is thought to have been the production of a similar species of muscles." But it is time to return from our digression, and resume the thread of our narrative.

The monarch caused several mines to be opened, and their produce to be wrought by skilful artists.† Some goblets have been found in the Bog of Allen, which were made in the reign of Tighernmas, and their sculptured devices and beautiful workmanship, afford a proof of the proficiency of the ancient Irish in the fine arts. It is to this sovereign our historians also impute the invention of vats, for dying purple, yellow, and green. TIGHERNMAS, however, contrary

* The Irish have herbs for diet, for counteracting witchcraft, for physic, for dyeing, (an art in which they once excelled all Europe,) and almost for all uses."—*Vide Innis's letter to the Bishop of Derry, published in the Transac. of the Gaelic Society, Edinburgh, 1727.*

† The mountains of Ireland are full of mines and minerals. Gold and silver must have been very plenty in this country in ancient times, as all the knights wore golden helmets and chains, and a shield of the same precious metal. A bit of a bridle, of solid gold, of ten ounces, which was found in digging in some grounds, was sent as a present to Charles I. by the Earl of Strafford.

The same nobleman sent also an ingot of silver to the royal mint, from the mines of the county of Tipperary, which weighed three hundred ounces; and in his letter to the Secretary of State, he says, "that the lead mines in Munster were so rich, that every load of lead had in it forty pounds of fine silver." There are several considerable collieries in many parts of the kingdom, probably enough to supply all Europe with coals; but for want of government encouragement, they are neglected. Besides these, there are numerous iron mines and lead mines in the island. There is one lead mine, in the county of Antrim, so rich, that from every thirty pounds of lead one of silver is yielded. In fine, nature designed Ireland for the operations of art and agriculture; and, though she is unfortunately poor, she has exhaustless wealth in her own bosom, but under the hermetic seal of English policy.—WARNER.

to the advice and supplication of the Druids, introduced a species of worship which they pronounced idolatrous. The Druids, regardless of his power, every where denounced his heresy, and predicted the vengeance of the true national deities, the sun, moon, and stars, against the devoted monarch.

The king felt indignant, but durst not punish men who were revered as the ministers of Heaven. To show, however, his contempt of their idle threats, he erected a famous idol at Breffeny, in the county of Leitrim, called *Crom-Cruadh*, "the same god," says Dr. Keating, "that Zoroaster adored in Greece." On the eve of *Samhuin*, or November, which was the time appropriated to the worship of the moon, the king, no longer acknowledging the bright rays of that deity, "as light from Heaven," with his family, nobles, and soldiers, repaired to the plain of Breffeny, for the purpose of offering divine honors to his false God.* The Druids taking their station on a neighbouring hill, witnessed the heretical ceremony with horror and indignation. But scarcely had the monarch knelt before the idol, scarcely had the flames ascended from the burnt offerings, when the most awful thunder began to roar, and in another moment the dreadful lightning annihilated the idol, and made burned victims of Tighernmas and all his attendants. When the Druids saw the destruction with which divine wrath swept away idolatry, they set up a shout of exultation. We give this ludicrous fiction as we find it, in all our ancient histories, as an amusing fable foisted by the pious fraud of the Druids into our annals. The popular tradition of Leitrim still points out the scene of this invented catastrophe, and gives it the name of *Meagh-sleachta*, or the valley of worship. Before the reign of this victim of divine vengeance, the sun, moon, and stars, were the only objects of religious adoration; objects which, though virtually as unworthy of human homage as the shapeless matter that is moulded into form by the art of man, still raise the mind beyond the narrow limits of terrestrial existence, and equally impress us with the solemnity of religion, and the awful sublimity of boundless and infinite creation.

TIGHERNMAS according to Keating and O'Halloran, who follow the authority of the annalist, *Giolla Caomhain*, who flourished in the tenth century, reigned fifty years.

Before we close this chapter, we will endeavour to reflect some light of investigation on the darkness that conceals the origin of one of the most noted religious orders of antiquity, we mean the Druids. The laudability of the attempt will excuse its defects. Let us take a retrospective view of the first ages of the world, and explore the rude policy of their incipient designs, and we shall often behold grand, strange, and unexpected events arise from the simplest causes; we shall behold the moral imitate the physical world; and we shall

* BREFFENY, or the country of small hills, formerly comprehended the counties of Leitrim and Cavan, and a district of Longford, and was owned by the regal septs, O'Rourke, O'Reilly, O'Farrell, O'Brady, O'Curry, O'Sheridan, M'Kernan, and M'Gaurall, until the reign of the English Messalina, Elizabeth, who basely despoiled them of their patrimonial estates. We will have occasion again to say more of Breffeny.

frequently return from the intellectual pursuit, if not enriched and enlightened with all the acquisition of knowledge that inquiry can impart, at least edified and blessed with all the pleasure which imagination can bestow. In countries covered with eternal forests, as we must suppose the greater portion of the earth to have been shortly after the flood, the first Planters would naturally settle in those parts that were more open, and best adapted for agriculture. Among these first planters there might be found a few, who smitten with sacred love of meditation and the silence of the shades, would naturally shun the vulgar commerce of mankind and retire among the sombre oaks, to commune with the genius of solitude ; and study the philosophy of religion in the impressive characters of nature. Blessed with that wisdom, with which contemplation invests the mind, and which indeed, in the bustle of public life is seldom to be found, *Rara avis in terris*, they would naturally fix their habitation, when they had imbibed the first principles of morality and natural religion. Here the beacon of silence would cast a steady radiance on their understandings, while free from the tempest of the passions. Here they would be consulted by those who had less experience in the duties imposed upon humanity, by the light of reason, and the admonitions of that interior monitor, which directs all those who are attentive to its counsels as well in the palace, as in the cottage ; as well in the bustle of society, as in the privacy of retirement ; as well amid the turbulent and ungovernable commotions of a seditious populace, as in the dreary and sequestered solitudes of the Arabian wild. Such men would attract attention and command respect ; such men would surely be consulted in matters of state, and public interest, and on all extraordinary occasions ; nor would they long stand in need of disciples and followers to assist them in the discharge of the various and important duties imposed upon them, by their superior knowledge, and endowments. Consequently these disciples would draw wisdom from the fount of instruction and with minds and passions elevated by philosophy to the summit of reason, they would soon become a distinct order of men, and be at the head of all affairs both in church and state. Thus they would be philosophers by Profession—Priests by the veneration paid to them—Judges, by the choice of the people—Poets, from the warm and pathetic feelings which are inspired by the contemplation of nature—and Historians from their learning, and the active part they would be obliged to take in the affairs of state. To secure, however, that veneration and esteem which they would wish to procure by the sanctity of their lives, the brilliancy of their attainments, and their isolated retreat from the world, they would still avoid a general intercourse with the people ; they should do so because that a conformity of proceeding would be necessary to preserve that respect which originated in the belief of their superior piety and qualifications, while aware that the character should be sustained to the last, without being lessened by inconsistency ; and experience itself would soon inform them that a communion with the world would speedily bring them into contempt. That such an order of men would arise from such circumstances, is indeed, more than probable ; and will, we

doubt not, appear with new evidence to the cautious reader the more he examines it.

If such was the origin, such certainly was the order of the ancient Druids. They were in Ireland from the days of Heremon, to the introduction of Christianity. Priests, Judges, Philosophers, Poets, and Historians, and their manner of life exactly corresponds to the supposition we have made.

The Irish arch-Druid had great power and authority, and his person was sacred and inviolable. He was chief of the literati, and high pontiff of religion. As this was the next station to the sovereign himself, an eminent place of the most important trust and responsibility, it was uniformly conferred on a branch of the royal tree, as this history will show. This was also the custom, as Ledwich tells us, in Scythia and Tyre.

Pliny informs us that their places of worship were surrounded by groves of oak, and that they were not permitted to sacrifice out of them. He also tells us that the oak was held in such reverence by the Roman Druids, that it was supposed to be sacred to the Deity. We likewise read in Ovid, that all the Druids assembled at the cutting of the *Mistletoe*, and commenced the performance of their mysteries.* Julius Cæsar, in his commentaries, gives us a view of the Druids in Gaul, in his days, whom he represents secluded in the dark recesses of oak forests, cultivating the abstrusest sciences, and penetrating the sublimest mysteries of nature, and anticipating the discoveries of Pythagoras, and Newton. It is manifest, that woods and forests, were intimately interwoven in their system of religion. We have already stated that the first name of Ireland, which stands upon record, was, "*Inis na Bhfiodhbhuidhe*" or the woody Island. The Irish Druid worshipped one supreme Being, not in temples as the Greeks and Romans, but in Groves consecrated to him. They believed in a future state of rewards and punishments, which should be regulated by the Deity according to their conduct in this life.

* The Druids of Gaul, according to Pliny, held nothing so sacred as the *Mistletoe*, and the trees upon which it grew. They selected groves of this wood for religious purposes; nor did they perform any sacred office without garlands of its leaves, from whence they derived their name of Druids. This was done on the sixth day of the moon; a day so much esteemed by them, that they have made their months and ages (which consisted of about thirty years) to take their beginning from it. The *Mistletoe* when found was collected with great ceremony. Having prepared their feasts and sacrifices under the oak, two white bulls were tied to it. A Priest clad in white robes ascended the tree, and cut off the *Mistletoe*, and let it fall into a white garment which another Druid spread to receive it. They then sacrificed their victims.

The *Mistletoe*, continues Pliny, administered as a potion, is believed to have a charm for preserving female chastity, and for counteracting the effects of poison.

"The Gaulish Druids had their Priestesses and Prophetesses, and some of those females were in high repute among the Gauls, and bore great sway in their government. If the Druids tried female virtue by ordeal, the Jews too had the "*waters of jealousy*," to assure them of the fidelity or infidelity of their wives."—*Universal Hist.*

"The Irish Druids were, according to Bede, and other authorities, much more learned than those of Gaul, as the former were, as far as I can gather from historical evidence, well versed not only in the sciences, but in the philosophy and literature of Egypt and Greece."—*Vide Mallet's Northern Antiquities.*

They always raised their immense altars of stone, on the summit of high hills, on which they generally offered their bloody and expiatory sacrifices.

They built many stupendous temples, which they used as colleges for the initiation and instruction of their novices, but not as places of worship, as they thought, with the ancient Persians, that it was absurd and unworthy the Author of all being and places, to make sacrificial oblations to him within walls raised by human hands, or under any roof except the dome of Heaven. The god Bel or Belus they worshipped by consecrated fires, which they lit on every first of May, on the highest hills in the Island. On the celebration of this holy ceremony, called in Irish, *Bel tinne*, or the fire of Belus, every other fire in the kingdom was extinguished, and, after the solemnities were over, the people were obliged to apply to the Druids for consecrated fire to light their household hearths.

That the sway of the Druids, and the despotic power which they exercised over the superstitious fears of the Heathen Irish were detrimental to the liberties and happiness of the people must be admitted. Such was the preponderance of this power, that several of our monarchs sunk under it.

Whenever any one was bold enough to refuse submission to their decisions, either in civil or religious matters, he was seized and immediately immolated as a victim on their altar. In the course of this history, we will adduce instances of their having dethroned kings, and of even putting an immediate stop to an engagement, when both armies were furiously rushing to the onset. They were regarded as the vicegerents of Heaven, and looked upon, in consequence, as the dernier appeal in all cases; and their terrible excommunication, a punishment which was considered by the ancient Irish as the most infamous and degrading, was the lot of those unfortunate recusants, that disobeyed the mandates of the tyrannic theocracy. "The Irish Druids not only presided," says Warner, "at their religious rites, but no public transaction passed without their approbation; nor was the greatest malefactor put to death without their consent. They were not only the most noble and considerable people of their country, to whose care was committed the education of their youth and the Kings and Princes children, but it was a notion prevalent in those times, that they had a communication with Heaven by way of divination, soothsaying and the magic art." The Irish Druids were certainly a body of men whose erudition embraced the widest scope of literature and the arts; and St. Patrick himself bears an honorable testimony to their proficiency in the classic languages, and their profound knowledge of metaphysical philosophy. BORLASE, who was no friend of our country, candidly acknowledges that the British and Welsh Druids were only the disciples of the Irish Pontiffs whom they obeyed as the Metropolitans of the druidical order. We hope, we shall, in the progress of this history, be able to advance satisfactory and conclusive arguments in support of the opinion, that Ireland was not only the chief seat, but the very fountain, whence emanated the stream of European Druidism. In the next chapter we will give a detail of the

principles, form of worship, and ritual of the pagan religion of the ancient Irish.

CHAPTER IX.

The Religion and form of worship of the Pagan Irish.—The reigns of Eochaidh, Cearmna, and Sobhairce, Eochaidh II.—Fiachadh, Eochaidh III. Aongus, Eadhna, Rotheachta, Seadhna, Fiachadh II. Muinheamhoin, and Aldergoid.—Ollamh Fodhla, his glorious reign, institutions, and legislative ordinances: and the National Assembly at Tara.

A. M. 2865. The Celtic religion, of the ancient Irish, was in many respects similar to that of the Jewish Patriarchs. They worshipped one Supreme Being, in the sacred groves, consecrated to him: they offered victims to him, and other sacrifices of expiation. Their ritual was remarkable for its awful simplicity. They worshipped the Sun by the name of Bel, and the Moon, which they placed next to the Sun, in reverence for its attributes and nocturnal glory. The class of Druids, who offered the lunar sacrifices, were called *Samnothei*; they inculcated the doctrine of transmigration, and maintained that the soul must be purified in different bodies, before it could enter the celestial mansions of happiness. The religious festival of the Moon was celebrated on the first of November. The temple of the Moon was, we are told, an immense pile, whose ruins are still to be seen at Talchta, in the County of Meath. Here, on every eve of November, the votaries of Cynthia assembled in multitudes, to offer adoration, and receive the consecrated fire of *Samhuin*, or the Moon, from the Druids; for it was deemed an act of enormous impiety to kindle the winter hearths from any other, than the divine flame of the holy altars of Samhuin. The tax levied from every house for the Moon-fire brought immense revenues to the Druids.—The Gauls and Britons derived, according to Bede, the principles of their theology from the Irish Druids.* The learned Charles O'Connor says, "Our ancestors worshipped Bel, or Beleus as God of the sun, or fire,† and so did the ancient fire-worshippers of Persia,

* "The ancient mode of worship adopted by the Celtic and Scythian nations of Europe, seems evidently to have originated in Ireland. This much, at least, is certain, that the religion of the Gauls, as delivered by Cæsar, an indisputable authority, and such accounts as other writers, Greek and Roman, have furnished to us, are in the fullest manner elucidated and confirmed by Irish history."—O'HALLORAN.

"The religion of the Gauls was founded on the same theological principles, as those practised in the ritual of the heathen Irish. What the original Celtic religion was, we learn not only from Irish history; but from the concurrent testimony of foreign authors also, that it was the same with that of the old patriarchs. They worshipped one Supreme Being, not in temples, but in groves of oak, which being open at the top and sides, were, in their opinion, more acceptable to the divine and unconfined being, whom they adored. They believed in a future state of rewards and punishments, suitable to their behaviour in this life."—WARNER.

† "*Mithras*, the sun, which was worshipped by the idolatrous Persians;—that word, however, signifies fire in the literal sense. *Miteras* is certainly called fire

by the name of *Mithras*: and Apollo, I take to be only a corruption of Beleus, being among the Greeks and Romans the God of the sun, and consequently one of their deities borrowed from the old Celts." This hypothesis strengthens the historical supports of our country being the hyperborean Isle of the ancients.*

In our last chapter, we narrated the fatal circumstance that grew out of the idolatry of TIGHERNMAS and deprived him of life, and kingdom. Some writers, among whom are the acute O'Flaherty, and the learned Lynch, contend, that there was an interregnum of seven years, after the death of this Prince. We, however, on the authority of Dr. Keating, and O'Halloran dissent from an opinion, which is not sustained by a concurrence of historical evidence. Neither the regal list of *Giolla Caomhain*, the psalter of Cashel, nor the Bruodin chronicle, makes any allusion to such a chasm in our sovereign supremacy. An interregnum of seven years, would be inconsistent with the genius of the Milesian constitution. We do not think it probable, that a crown for which there were so many rival candidates, and which even the lawful monarch could, often, only retain by force of arms, would remain in obedience, for such a period, without exciting the ambition, or tempting the struggles of the provincial kings. In some instances, indeed, the elected king is not acknowledged as supreme monarch, or *Ard Righ*, (supreme King) by our annalists, who bestowed on them the appellation of *Gafra Sabrach*, or monarchs not legally chosen by general consent. "When we reflect," says O'Halloran, "on the nature of the succes-

by the Scythians, from whom the Irish are descended, as well as the Persians. The similarity of language and ancient mode of worship of the Persians and Irish confirm, in some degree, the pretensions of the latter to an eastern origin."—*Toland's Hist. of the Druids*.

"We may remark here by the way, that the *Scots* (as the Irish were originally called) in the extremity of the west, had descended from the same Scythian ancestors with the Persians, in almost the extremities of the east, as is demonstrable not only from similitude of theology, but of language also, the strongest evidence for the origin of any nation; thus *Caors*, fire, is *Cyr* in Persian. *Cios*, a stipend or tribute, is *Gas* or *gaz* in Persian"—BOXHORNIIUS.

* "The Scots brought this religion from Spain, before it received any considerable alterations from the intercourses with the Tyrians, Phœnicians and other nations, who settled in that country. It is without dispute, from the glory and renown which the heathen ministers of this religion gained throughout all Europe, that the name of "IERNE," or sacred Isle, was given to Ireland."—*Dissert. on Irish Hist.* page 98.

"Diodorus Seculus has preserved an account out of *Hecateus*, a very ancient author of a northern Island, little less than Sicily, situated over against the Celtæ, and inhabited by those whom the Greeks called *Hyperboreans*. "It is," says he, "fruitful, pleasant and dedicated to Apollo. That God, for the space of nineteen years, used to come and converse with them, and, which is more remarkable, they could, as if they had the use of Telescopes, show the moon very near them. They had a large grove, and temple of a round form to which the Priests frequently resorted with their harps to chaunt the praises of Apollo, their great deity." "The situation of the Island, opposite to the Celtæ, who were the inhabitants of Britain, and Gallia;—its being compared with Sicily in size;—its being dedicated to Apollo, *i. e.* the sun, which planet the Irish certainly worshipped; the description of their temples, which were always round; and the mention of their harps; are all so many concurring circumstances which seem more than probable, that this could be no other country than Ireland."—*Idem* Dr. Smith's *History of the county of Cork*, Vol. I. page 267.

sion ; that the nation, from the Prince to the peasant was divided into classes ; that honour and dignities were hereditary in families ; and that in times of the greatest distress, particularly during the Danish wars, these customs prevailed ; in fact the constitution ceased as soon as they were discontinued, we must doubt the probability of such an interregnum." Be this as it may, the succeeding monarch was EOCHAIDH, son of Datre of the royal line of Ith. Whether it was conquest or election raised him to the throne, we are not informed. He was surnamed *Edghachach*, or of the many coloured robe, because his silken mantle was as variegated as the rainbow. He is neither distinguished for virtues nor vices in our annals. All that we are told, is that after a disturbed reign of four years, he was slain by CEARMNA, of the line of Ir. The homicide, in conjunction with his brother Sobhairce, assumed sovereign power. They, like many of their predecessors, made a partition of the kingdom.

The southern division, from Drogheda to Limerick, was governed by Cearmna ; the northern, from the Boyne to Londonderry, by SOBHAIRCE. They were united by affection and policy, but after a turbulent reign of forty years, they were defeated and slain, at the battle of Tara, by EOCHAIDH *Faobharglas* (or the green blade) of the royal dynasty of Heber.

This Prince ascended the Irish throne, A. M. 2909. He caused several forges to be erected for the fabrication of martial weapons. He filled all his arsenals with arms, and the appellation of *Faobharglas* was given him, from his having discovered the art of giving different colours to sword blades. We are informed that the points of his javelins, spears, and scimitars were green. In the psalter of Cashel, he is distinguished by the title of *Faobhardhearg*, or the king of the bloody edge, intimating the prowess of his sword in cutting down his enemies in battle. He invaded Scotland, punished the Picts for assisting the late kings of the house of Ir, and after obliging them to pay tribute and give him hostages, bound them by oath never to interfere again in the elections of the Irish monarchs.

He returned to Tara in triumph, but the Hebereans conspired against him, and, with their followers, attacked him, and succeeded in vanquishing his army and killing himself, at the battle of Corman, in Meath.

FIACHADH *Labhrúine*, the chieftain of the victorious Hebereans, was invested with the royal purple, A. M. 2929. The epithet *Labhrúine*, was given him from Inbher Labhrúine, a river, that suddenly made its appearance in his reign. It is also recorded that Lough Erne, in the county of Fermanagh, one of the most beautiful and picturesque lakes in Europe, overflowed its bounds in this reign, and deluged an extensive scope of the country, belonging, then, to the *Ernaans* of the Belgic tribe, from whom this noble sheet of water derives its name. In our topography of the counties of Sligo, Fermanagh and Cavan, we shall describe the enchanting Islands, with which Loch Erne is interspersed, and the romantic domains with which its limpid waters are fringed.

FIACHADH was a Prince of martial genius, and great capacity for government. He defeated the Hebereans in four successive engage-

ments, and afterwards embarked with his son Aongus, for Scotland, where he soon quelled an insurrection of the Picts, from whom he exacted the usual tribute.* But neither his virtues, nor his valour could guard his throne from the machinations of conspirators. EOCHAIDH, the grandson of the monarch of that name, raised the standard of revolt and gave battle to *Fiachadh*, on the plains of Bealgadin, where the brave king fell covered with glory, after a reign of twenty-seven years. The defeat and death of the heroic *Fiachadh* gave the victor, EOCHAIDH III. the son of Maferbhis, the son of Eochaidh II. possession of the Irish crown. He was surnamed *Munho*, from his strength and power; and it is from him that Munster derives its name, as the psalter of Cashel testifies. His reign makes no great figure in our annals. He lost his power as he gained it, by insurrection. AONGUS, the son of *Fiachadh*, at the head of his adherents brought the king to an engagement, at Cliach, where the royal troops were routed and the monarch slain, A. M. 2975. The accession of AONGUS, who was distinguished by the appellation of the *Ol-Bhuadhaich*, or the invincible victor, to the throne, was hailed by the universal acclamation of the Irish people. He had talents fit to shine in the field and in the cabinet. In the beginning of his reign, the Damnonii of Connaught made an attempt to shake off his authority; but he soon suppressed this rebellion, and reduced the insurgents to subjection.

He pursued a legion of the rebels to Britain, whither they had fled in hopes of obtaining succours from the Picts; and succeeded, not only in annihilating them, but in chastising also the Picts for giving them reception, contrary to the faith of treaties.

He must, indeed, have met a determined opposition from the revolted Belgae, and their allies the Picts, as our historians say that they fought 30 pitched battles with him, before they had yielded to his subjection. On his return home, flushed with victory, he was obliged to march to Thomond and Fermanagh, to chastise the disaffected Ernaans, and Fomorian. Having thus crushed domestic, and subdued foreign enemies, he turned his thoughts to the internal improvement of his kingdom. He caused ten woods to be cut down, and

* "This gallant king and his son Aongus, engaged the Scottish Picts, and the old Britons that inhabited *Albania*, and defeated them in every action. The effect of these victories was an entire conquest of the country, and a reduction of that war-like people, the Caledonians, as well as the Picts, to pay homage to the crown of Ireland. For though the Picts had from the time of Heremon, been tributaries to the Irish, for the space of 230 years after the Milesians first possessed themselves of the Island, yet the Scots never owned themselves under subjection, till they were conquered by *Fiachadh Labhrúine*, who compelled the whole kingdom of Scotland to obedience, and forced the inhabitants to pay an annual tribute."—KEATING.

"Indeed all our own old historians admit that we were for ages before, and after the birth of Christ, tributary to the crown of Ireland."—*Laing's Hist of Scotland*.

"That Scotland was a colony of Ireland cannot be denied. The evidence of history is too strong to be disputed by us. Dr. Blair, with all his genius and national enthusiasm, has failed in his attempt to remove the landmarks of Scottish and Irish history."—*Disser. on the origin of the Scythian, Irish and Picts*. Edinburgh, 1799. Vol. I. page 97.

the soil which they had covered, to be cultivated. During his reign, it is said, that an overflowing of the ocean separated Eaba from Rosketa, in Carberry, in the county of Sligo. But in the eighteenth year of his reign, EADHNA AIRGHTHEACH, the son of Eochaidh Mumho, caused a defection of his people, which eventuated in his overthrow, and death in battle. The conqueror *Eadhna* ascended the throne. He received the appellation of *Airghtheach*, or the silver, from his having bestowed many shields and targets of pure silver on his officers as a reward for their merit and intrepidity in his wars.

This monarchs war chariot, all our historians say, was composed of silver, and rendered still more costly by the lavish embellishments of art with which it was ornamented.* The Abbe McGeoghegan, however, conjectures that the epithet *Airghtheach* might have been derived from his riches, as he amassed immense wealth from conquests and tributes. We have no account of his campaigns, after his accession to the throne. In the twenty-seventh year of his reign, in attempting to quell the insurrection of ROTHEACHTA, the grandson of Aongus, his army was destroyed and himself slain at Raighne, in Leinster, A. M., 3020.

The success of the insurrection, put the reins of royal authority into the hands of its leader.

There is nothing particular related in our annals of Rotheachta, but that he fell by the hand of Seadhna, his successor, at the battle of Cruachan, in Connaught, after a reign of twenty-five years.

The victorious SEADHNA, of the line of Ir, succeeded to the crown, A. M. 3045, but after a short reign of five years, undistinguished by any exploit or act of beneficence, he was barbarously cut off by his own son FIACHADH at *Rathcruachan*, assisted by hired African assassins.

The vile parricide, with hands still reeking with the blood of his parent, seized the sceptre, A. M. 3050. His atrocious deed rendered him an object of general detestation, and conscious guilt kept his mind in daily alarm. He never went out of the recesses of his palace, without being surrounded by his guards. He obtained the name, or adjunct of *Fiosgothach*, from his having made wine from

* "Certain it is that the Irish military, indeed, like all true sons of the blade, placed their greatest glory in the splendour and richness of their arms. This *Solinus*, otherwise no admirer of the Irish, fully confesses. That they also fought in chariots highly ornamented, cannot be doubted; because our history abounds with accounts of them, and the beauty, spirit, and even the names of the very horses employed in them are not forgot. We have seen when different coloured blades were introduced by Eochaidh, and this, and the detail of our *Carcads*, or chariots of war, will fully explain the description which *Florus* gives us of *Botuitus*, in the *Allobrogian* war, "who added splendour to the triumph, being drawn in his silver chariot with his arms of different colours, such as he fought with."—O'HALLORAN.

"The order of battle among the old Irish soldiers is not sufficiently explained by the prints and manuscripts that have fallen into our hands; but this we are assured of, that their *Carcads*, or military chariots, were of great use; by creating confusion, and breaking the ranks of an enemy, in plains of too great an extent. So expert were they in this kind of exercise, that great feats are recorded of some of our ancient military charioteers. The chariots of Connal Kearnach, and Cuchullin have been immortalized by Ossian.—*Diss. on Irish Hist.* page 66.

certain flowers, with which Ireland, it is said, abounded in those days. O'Halloran is of opinion, that the culture of vines was much improved at this time; and that conjecture is still borne out more strongly by the authority of other antiquarian writers.* But notwithstanding the precaution of *Fiachadh*, and the vigilance of his guards, divine vengeance at length overtook him, in the twentieth year of his reign.

In an engagement with MUINHEAMHOIN, of the royal stock of Heber, he lost his life and throne, A. M. 3070.

The Victor, as usual, ascended the throne of his predecessor, by the unanimous consent of a people who, for twenty years, groaned under the despotism of a cruel implacable tyrant. MUINHEAMHOIN began his reign under the most flattering national auspices, and his government daily developed the beneficial effects of the justice and clemency which constituted its basis. The blessings of peace promoted national happiness and prosperity. He was the founder of the royal order of the *golden-collar*, which became afterwards so honorable, that no Prince could presume to ascend the throne of Ireland, who did not belong to it. He who aspired to this exalted order, besides being of noble birth, should also give the following proofs of chivalric dexterity, before he could be admitted a member of it. A buckler was attached to a post, in the middle of a plain, and according to the number of lances that the candidate broke against it in running, he was more or less honoured, and if he was at his first essay, fortunate enough, in breaking the prescribed number, he in that case gained his admission, and the Herald at arms then recommended him to the king, before whom, and the knights, he was to exhibit other feats of chivalry, in the court of tournament, where the monarch invested him with the collar. *Froissard* informs us, that the same ceremony was observed at the reception of a king's son into this illustrious order, and as they were sometimes admitted at a very tender age, they were furnished with lances of a weight proportioned to their strength. At the age of seven years, the Princes were inducted in the military academy at Tara, where they were regularly instructed in military discipline. The first arms put into their hands, in the academy, were a lance and sword; at ten years of age, they were exercised in casting a javelin at a mark, at which, in process of time they became so

* "That the Milesians introduced the vine in Ireland there can be no dispute; from the accounts which we have in old poems, and genealogies, of the vast quantities of wine which were used at their feasts and entertainments." We have no authority of their having imported any wine.—*Leslie's Irish Sylva*. Dublin 1735. Page 177.

"The culture of the vine was so much regarded by the ancient Irish that the Brehons promulgated a special law for the protection and encouragement of the vine-fields."—*Vide J. C. Walker's Rise and Progress of Gardening, in Ireland*.

"It seems clear to me, that wine was formerly made amongst us. The venerable Bede, in his Ecclesiastical history, affirms that wine was very plenty in Ireland, and should his testimony want further support, we find Irish words for every thing relative to this precious fruit; As *Fion-Amhuin*, which signifies a vine-yard, *Fion-Dios*, a wine press, *Fion-Chaor*, a grape, &c., so that it is with some reason I assert, that about this time the culture of vines was much improved in Ireland."—*O'Halloran*.

expert as to transfix a brazen shield at every aim. After becoming proficient in this exercise, they then practised the *Cran-Tubal* or sling, from which they could dart balls with great force and precision. Having acquired a perfect mastery over these weapons; at fourteen they mounted the war chariot, armed with the long spear and heavy battle axe, and as soon as they could sufficiently govern their coursers, and drive them through various evolutions with quick celerity, with one hand, and wield the spear and battle axe, alternately, with the other, they were admitted to the honour of knighthood, and assigned a command in their father's army.

Let it not be supposed from this statement, that all their time was devoted to the study of arms: on the contrary, they were also obliged to be conversant with general literature and science; for it is a historical fact, that poetry was such an essential branch of education among the Irish Princes, that every king, ere he ascended the throne, was necessitated to compose the funeral song of his predecessor, and sing it to his harp.

MUINHEAMHOIN, also caused helmets to be made, ornamented with pure gold, which he distributed among the bravest of the military and the most meritorious of the nobles.* Dr. O'Halloran informs us, that the gold, in the front of the helmet, was in the form of a crescent; that he had seen several of them; and had one for a considerable time in his possession, which weighed three ounces. Indeed, in the course of this history, we shall have ample opportunities to dilate on the vast quantities of gold, silver, and precious stones, which were possessed by the old Irish.†

The reign of this Prince, which was a continued scene of peace, and internal improvement, lasted but five years, he was carried off by the plague, A. M. 3075. He was succeeded by his son ALDERGOID, a Prince of whom little is recorded, except that he invested the Bards, and *Ollamhs* (Doctors) with new powers and dignities, and as an honorary mark of distinction, he ordered them to wear gold

* "The ancient Irish nobility, before the arrival of the English, were the *Righ*, *Neimed*, *Toifeach*, *Tiarna* and *Flath*. The first was the provincial king; the second the chief of a large district; the third a military leader; and the last the ruler of a Rath." (The Rath is a large, lofty and circular mote, composed of stone, bedded in lime, and clay, and generally encompassed with a high rampart. Their number in Ireland is innumerable. In many of them are caves, and circular chambers of spacious extent. They are in general so situated, that a correspondence, by telegraphic signals, could be expeditiously circulated from one to another, throughout the country. Antiquarians are not agreed as to the epoch of their erection; but we shall treat of these mounds elsewhere, in this work.) "This order of nobility held in a chain of subordination by feudal tenures, from the *Ardrigh*, or supreme monarch of the Isle."—*Anthologia Hib. Vol. I. page 38.*

Every tribe had its legitimate chief or head of a clan, among whom the country was divided. The principal chieftains of Ireland, on the landing of Henry II. were—McCarthy, Prince of Desmond; O'Brien, Prince of Thomond; Kinselagh, Prince of Leinster, as the descendant of Cahir the great; Urial, or Uladh, under the O'Donlevys and McMahan's; Clan-Coleman, chieftains of Meath; the O'Neil's and O'Donnell's, Princes of Ulster; and the O'Connor's, Princes of Hy-Fiachra, or Connaught.—*Disser. on Irish Hist. page 176.*

† "The ancient Irish were very fond of gold ornaments, and utensils. Spenser relates that they used golden bridle bits, stirrups, spurs, petronels, drinking cups, and candlesticks, even in his day, when they were suffering under the grinding laws of Queen Elizabeth."—VALLANCEY.

rings on their fingers. From allowing the poets and artists to deck their hands with rings, he got the appellation of *Aldergoid*, as we are told by the Psalter of Cashel. For *Failge*, or *faine*, signifies a ring or gold; and *doid*, the hand. This was the origin of wearing rings in Ireland. We believe the custom of embellishing the hand with rings originated in Egypt. We read in the Bible that Pharaoh, presented Joseph with gold rings, when he interpreted his dream. After the reign of Aldergoid, the custom of wearing rings, in Ireland, remained an honorary distinction. When the monarch appointed his poet Laureate, he placed a ring on his finger, with his own hands. We are told by historians, that in the eighth century, when Claude Clement, and John Scot, both Irishmen, and the founders of the university of Paris, were appointed regents of the Colleges of Pavia, and Paris, by Charlemagne, they first introduced the *Birede*, or Doctor's cap, and the gold ring, by which distinctive investments they preceded all ranks, but the nobility.

In the twelfth year of his reign, the Irish, instigated by Eochaidh, the son of Fiachadh, of the house of Ir, broke out in rebellion against Aldergoid, who on coming to an engagement with the insurgents, was killed at the battle of Tara, A. M. 3087.

After this victory, Eochaidh took possession of the throne. His coronation presented one of the most splendid spectacles that was ever witnessed in Ireland; all the Druids, Bards, Warriors, Nobles, and Knights in the kingdom were present at the august and pompous ceremony. Being a Prince of extensive attainments and a lover of literature, and the arts, at his inauguration he assumed the Bardic habit, and the name of OLLAMH FODHLA, or the *Doctor of Ireland*. "*Fodhla*," says O'Flaherty, "was the name given to Ireland by the Gaodhals, or Iberian Scots." The reign of this Prince commenced about six hundred years before the Christian era. His literary talents, and legislative wisdom are emblazoned by our historians in the most brilliant picture, that the genius of Irish poetry could paint.

Annalists and Bards have pronounced his apotheosis and arrayed his fame with the splendour of "every virtue under heaven." The salutary laws which he enacted, the judicious institutions he established, the encouragement he gave to genius, and the beneficial reforms he effected, in every branch of the government, must ever keep his name buoyant on the flood of historical panegyric. It is not, then, too much to say that his reign constitutes the most memorable epoch in the Milesian annals. For until his sagacity and judgment remedied the evils of ages, the Milesians could not be said to possess a government under the wholesome and wise restriction of impartial laws and civil policy.

The first great measure of his reign was to establish a NATIONAL CONVENTION at Tara.* The national assembly consisted of the pro-

* "Tara was the royal seat of the kings of Ireland, and the principal court of legislation from the days of this renowned monarch, down to the reign of Dermot O'Carroll, A. D. 560, so that the *Fes*, or parliament, continued its sittings from time to time there, through a series of more than eleven hundred years. Since the year of Christ, 560, our national assemblies were removed from *Teamore*, and kept occasionally in other parts of the Island, patrimonially subject to the north

vincial Kings, Nobles, Druids, Brehons, Bards and Artists. This parliament was convened three days before the great feast of *Samhuin* (or the Moon) and the two first days were spent in making visits, the third in celebrating the rites and festivities of the moon in the grand temple. The Druids having performed the sacred mysteries, the temple was illuminated, and their deities invoked to look with a propitious eye on the national councils. The three succeeding days were devoted to joy and festivity ; all the people mingled in the general carnival without distinction.

On the fourth day, the Esquires of the nobility, being summoned by the sound of a trumpet, appeared at the Portico of the grand hall, and delivered up the shields and ensigns of their chiefs, to the deputies of the great marshal of the crown.

These shields and banners were placed according to the rank of their different owners, by the king at arms, on stands appropriated for them, in the senatorial hall. All these banners, by order of the monarch, had the family coat of arms emblazoned upon them, but as we intend to devote part of the next chapter to the armorial bearings and heraldic devices of the Irish Princes, we will not enter into a detail here. Soon after the target bearers of the general officers were called by a second blast of the trumpet to deliver up their targets. As soon as these were arranged, all the heralds stationed themselves on a gallery before the grand portico, and gave a royal flourish of trumpets, when immediately after, the gorgeous procession, headed by the supreme monarch, arrayed in his royal robes, and supported by his standard bearers, commenced ; the Queen, supported by two Princesses, having her train borne by fifty maids of honour, followed by the hundred virgins of the moon, moved after the king in the order of march ; then came the four provincial kings, followed by the Druids, Nobility, Bards, Knights, Esquires and Soldiers. The entrance of the assembly was announced by sacred odes set to a grand variety of musical instruments. *Míodh Cuarta*, (or the house of kings and nobles,) the great chamber of the national representatives, was three hundred feet long, thirty cubits high, and fifty in width. It had access by fourteen doors, which opened on several adjoining apartments, fitted up for the kings and deputies of each province.

The monarch's throne was placed in the centre of the hall, under a richly ornamented canopy of yellow and scarlet silk. Behind the throne there was a gallery for the accommodation of the Queen, Princesses, ladies, and the virgins of the moon. The space that in-

and south Hy-Nials. Tara, for some wicked proceedings (of which great national councils give but too many instances) was formally pronounced accursed by the Arch-Bishop of Armagh and his suffragans, and no monarch of Ireland sat there, after the period we have mentioned, down to the dissolution of the monarchy, under Roderick O'Connor."—*Disser. on Irish Hist.*

All that now remains of the once magnificent palace of Tara—of the hall of the national assembly, and of its stupendous Druidical college, is a ruined castle on the summit of a hill, and the moss-clad fragments of an ancient abbey on the neighbouring eminence of Skreene, in the county of Meath. Such are the relics, not like those of Persepolis or Jerusalem, "grand even in desolation," of the regal residence of a thousand Irish kings.—*Author.*

tervened the back of the throne, and the gallery, was occupied by the seat of the king of Connaught, over whom four knights held a green and purple canopy, emblazoned with his arms ; as well as with parallel rows of benches for the Ollamhs, or Doctors. The particular reason for placing the king of Connaught in the back ground, is not sufficiently explained by any account extant. O'Flaherty conjectures that the cause was owing to the king of Connaught being of the Belgic race, and consequently, not entitled to so eminent a station, in the assembly, as the Milesian Princes.

The king of Leinster's throne fronted the monarch, whose face was turned to the west. The kings of Ulster and Munster occupied thrones on the right and left hand side.

Long benches were erected for the other orders of the state. Of these benches the Druids, the Bards, and Brehons, took the first ; next to these sat the hereditary marshal, standard bearers and treasurer ; then the nobility, knights, beatachs, and representatives of towns and cities. On one side there was a gallery for the convenience of the deputies of the Picts, Brigantes of Britain, and other strangers. Such was the order of the sittings of the great NATIONAL CONVENTION of Tara, which for ages after met triennially. The object of this legislative body was to regulate the affairs of the state ; to frame a new code of laws ; and to repeal such as were found inconsistent with the good of the subject ; and which might have been enacted through the ignorance of former legislators, or derive prescriptive authority from the caprice of custom. A salutary revision of old laws, and the enactment of new ones occupied the first deliberations of this senate.

They took cognizance of every thing connected with the state. Foreign alliances, peace, and war, and a rigorous examination of the national records, were matters of primary consideration. All their decisions were reduced by the recording Brehons into verse, and after being properly attested, registered in the royal archives.*

* "The *Brehon Fileas*, were commissioned to set down in writing every remarkable transaction worth recording, that happened in the kingdom, as well as in the neighbouring states, agreeably to the truth of the facts ;—and lest any error, or false insinuation should creep in or be introduced, they were bound in the general convention, or in the presence of the chief monarch, and a select committee of the nobility and Druids, to produce their writings every three years, when, after a diligent examination, and having expunged every fact, which appeared either uncertain or of doubtful authority, from the record, and none preserved but what was sanctioned by the votes of all as worthy of the great *Psalter of Tara* ; so called because it was compiled in verse to aid the memory, and to guard against corruptions and falsifications."—*Primate Usher*.

"To remedy the great evil of fictitious history, the productions of the historians were examined in the great *Fes* or parliament of Tara. Historical calumny was punished by a standing law. Thus the vast uncertainties to which the history of a free and divided people, is ever liable, were in a good degree prevented by the dread of legal inflictions."—*Dissert. on Irish Hist.*

"In this manner the ancient Irish preserved the anecdotes of every public transaction that was of importance enough to be delivered down to the world ; and it was a care perhaps peculiar to these people. The authors who had the insolence to impose upon posterity, either by perverting matters of fact, or representing them in partial and improper colours, to the unmerited reproach of any character were solemnly degraded from the honour of sitting in the national assembly."—

WARNER.

“What time the parliament of Tara,” says the learned O’CONNOR, “took up in despatching the multiplicity of affairs laid before them, and what their order of debate, and voting, we could not, by all inquiries, hitherto learn. What we know for certain of Irish legislation, may be brought within a small compass. The forms of the admirable constitution established by *Ollamh Fodhla*, were observed, even in the distractions of civil war. Their sessions were triennial; and in ratifying their ordinances, they took up six whole days, before the monarch gave them the royal assent.” In this high court the provincial kings were obliged to answer to the complaints of their subjects, and become responsible to the laws. If any prince proved refractory, every order in the state was to send in a certain quota of men, who in conjunction with the forces of the monarch, brought him to subjection.

This great legislator also enacted a law against the crime of rape, by which the delinquent was to suffer death, without liberty to make an appeal to royal clemency.

The same punishment was inflicted upon any one who molested any of the women of the provincial Queens, during the session; or who should assault or annoy a member of parliament going to, or coming from the hall of assembly. In order to give females the respect and regard which they deserved in society, the provincial Queens were empowered by the laws of this legislator, to discuss on, and devise regulations for the benefit of their sex, in an assembly which was called *Griannan na Ninghean*, or the sacred council of the ladies.

There were also assemblies here of an inferior nature, a particular court of justice was appointed to receive appeals from the provinces against the petty despotism of subordinate chiefs, which was called *Realta na Fhileadh*, or the decision of justice. All the records of the kingdom underwent a strict and critical examination, and the antiquarians became subject to the severest penalties, if they were convicted of falsehood, or of poisoning by slander, the current of historical accuracy. An abstract of all the provincial records was registered in the “*Senachas More*,” or the great story of antiquity, and then deposited in the archives of Tara. This famous Psalter commenced with the origin, exploits and migrations of the Milesians, written by Ollamh himself. But besides this general repository of Irish affairs, every province was obliged to keep a separate history, whence arose the Psalter of Cashel, the Psalters of Armagh, and Tuam; the books of Leath-Cuin, Dromsneachta, Glendaloch, of conquests and invasions. This monarch likewise established at Tara a university called *Mur-Ollamhan*, or the college of Doctors; and invested such as took their degrees here, with a privilege of taking precedence of all others of the same rank, in the kingdom. Such were the institutions of this enlightened and learned legislator—institutions founded on the soundest principles of justice and equity, and which the nation always looked upon as the great and sacred charter of their liberties. After an auspicious reign of forty years—a reign ennobled by royal virtue, and rendered immortal by the performance of acts of justice, of philanthropy and general utility,

our great legislator died at the palace of Tara, A. M. 3122, full of years and glory; leaving a rich and prosperous kingdom to his son, without a rival to question his right of succession.

CHAPTER X.

The reigns of Fion, Slanoll.—Irish Heraldry:—Milesian Banners and Armorial Bearings.—The accession of Giede to the throne:—The reign of Fiachadh III.—of Bearngall—of O' Lioll—of Siorna and Rotheachta.

A great Prince seldom has a great son, as the evidence of history demonstrates. The sons of Pompey and Constantine the Great, neither inherited the valour, the magnanimity, nor expanded intellect of their illustrious fathers. Had the son of Napoleon lived, and been raised to that throne on which his illustrious father shed such radiant glory, it is probable that he would not have displayed the genius or heroism of his great and magnanimous sire.

Our celebrated law-giver, *Ollamh Fodhla*, was succeeded by his son, FIONN, whom the Irish annalists designated *Fionn Sneachdach*, in consequence of the unusual quantities of snow that fell every succeeding winter during his reign.

This Prince is represented to have been mild and condescending in his behaviour, but much addicted to amatory gallantry; so that his court exhibited a continued scene of luxury and intrigue. The cares and duties of governing the nation devolved upon his ministers, while he himself ingloriously lolled on the soft lap of beauty. After a reign of twenty years, a reign only distinguished for profligacy, and demoralizing vices, he died of a fever, occasioned by excess of voluptuous pleasures, at Tara, A. M. 3142. Leaving no legitimate issue, his brother *Slainteach* (the all healthy) was called to the throne by the unanimous wishes of the nation.

The appellation of the *all healthy* was bestowed upon him, because no virulent or epidemic distemper broke out in Ireland, during his administration. He commenced his reign by making the most salutary reforms in the system of government, from which he lopped off all the cankering abuses, that crept into it, during the injudicious administration of his brother. He summoned the estates to Tara, and caused many plans, designed by his father, to be carried into effect. The laws of Heraldry were put in active operation. Every noble family had to furnish an attested and authenticated account of its pedigree, and genealogies, from the days of Milesius, which after having undergone the most scrupulous inquiry from the Chronologers and antiquarian Heralds, was registered in the records of nobility at Tara. Such nobles as adduced the requisite proofs of their Milesian descent, were assigned a coat of arms, allowed to assume badges of distinction, and emblazon their shields with symbolic devices. The warriors adorned their helmets with a crest, which generally represented some savage beast, or fierce bird of prey;

these emblematic figures, and high waving plumes distinguished the different leaders in battle, and served at once to encourage their soldiers and dismay their enemies. The chiefs who signally distinguished themselves by valour in a particular battle, were granted permission by the king, to delineate their banners with representations of the trees and herbage that grew in the field of fight, as glorious symbols of their gallantry.*

The royal banner of our Milesian monarchs, which displayed its emblazoned quarterings to the terrified Romans, at the battle of Cannae, and on the hills of Caledonia, and the wall of Severus, presented a dead serpent suspended from the miraculous rod of Moses. The cause of this device on our royal ensign, is owing to the Hebrew prophet having, as we have already recorded, cured the wound which the bite of a serpent had inflicted on the neck of *Gadelus*.

The harp, as we heretofore mentioned, was borne on the banner of *Slainge*, the Belgic chief, and first monarch of Ireland; and the Milesians continued the national emblem until the conquest of the Island. The misunderstanding that occurred between the two Milesian Princes, Heber and Heremon, as related in our preceding

* "Our Irish annals are very particular in accounting for the arms and devices borne by several eminent persons, and the most flourishing nations. They inform us that Hector, the Trojan hero, bore sable, two lions combatant, or that Osiris bore a Sceptre-royal ensigned on the top with an eye;—Hercules bore a lion rampant, holding a battle axe:—the arms of the kingdom of Macedon were a wolf—Anubis bore a dog; the Scythians, who remained in the country and made no conquests abroad as the Gadelians did, bore a thunderbolt;—the Egyptians bore an ox; the Phrygians a swine; the Thracians painted the god Mars upon their banners; the Romans an eagle, and the Persians bows and arrows. The old poet Homer, relates, that several curious devices were raised on the shield of Achilles, such as the motions of the sun and moon, the stars and planets, a sphere with the celestial bodies, the situation of the earth, the ebbing and flowing of the sea, with other uncommon decorations and ornaments that rendered it beautiful and surprising. Alexander the Great bore a lion rampant, and ordered his soldiers to display the same arms upon their shields, as a distinguishing mark of their valour and military achievements:—Ulysses bore a Dolphin, and the Giant Typhon belching out flames of fire: the arms of Perseus was a Medusa's head; Antiochus chose a lion and a white wand for his:—Theseus bore an ox, and Seleucus a bull:—Augustus Cæsar bore the image of Alexander the Great; but sometimes, he laid that aside, and used the sign capricorn; at other times he blazoned a globe, or the helm of a ship, supported commonly by an anchor and dolphin."—KEATING.

"The author of the *Leabhar Leatha*, treating upon this subject, gives this account of the coat of arms of the twelve tribes of Israel:—the tribe of Reuben had a mandrake painted upon their banners; Simeon, a spear; Levi the ark; Judah a lion; Issachar an ass; Zebulon a ship; Napthali a deer; Gad a lioness; Joseph a bull; Benjamin a wolf; Dan a serpent; and Asher a branch of vine."—OGYGIA.

"There was no nation where heraldic distinctions were more strictly regulated than in Ireland. When a chieftain distinguished himself against the enemy, his name and exploit were immediately entered into the records of his house, to be transmitted down from father to son; and by that means to inspire the several branches of the family with an emulation to imitate such a great example.

The yellow banner emblazoned with the dead serpent, and the rod of Moses, was borne by the standard bearer of Roderick O'Connor, when that last monarch of Erin had an interview with Henry II."—WARNER.

"The origin of Heraldry among us is undoubtedly very remote; I think it at least coeval with military institutions, and that it has preceded those of chivalry.

The business of the *Senachie*, or antiquarian, was to preserve the pedigrees of families only, whilst that of the *Marascal*, or Herald, was to blazon their arms, and determine their rank."—O'HALLORAN.

pages, concerning the possession of a famous poet and a masterly musician, who came in their suit from Spain, on being amicably adjusted by the decision of the arch-Druid, Amhergin, who assigned the musician to Heber, and the poet to Heremon. The brothers, to commemorate this happy concordance and settlement of their difference, quartered the harp on their ensigns, with the serpent and wand.

For ages the standard of Erin, which spread its brilliant quarterings in the breezes that bent alpine oaks, and shook Caledonian thistles, continued emblazoned with these armorial devices of our pristine greatness. But alas! that banner of glory which dazzled Roman legions with the thunder flashes of victory, has been rent by English oppression, and the gorgeous escutcheon on which martial renown had pictured the heroic deeds of our Cuchullins, McMornies, Fingals, Ossians, O'Neils, McCarthys, O'Briens, O'Donnels, and O'Connors, has been crumbled into the dust of oblivion by the ruthless hand of the Saxon despoilers.

The provincial kings bore their own proper and peculiar arms. The king of Munster's banner, before the reign of Brian Boroihme, displayed on a field azure, three eastern diadems proper. When Brian assumed sovereign sway over the two Munsters, he caused his shield to be emblazoned with three lions passant, and his royal banner presented on a wreath of green, a naked arm issuing out of a cloud, both proper, brandishing a sword pearl, the pomel and hilt topaz, supported by two lions guardant. This is the coat of arms still borne by the Marquis of Thomond, who is lineally descended from "Brian the brave." The arms of Ulster are on a green field, a lion rampant, double queved gules; but the O'Neil's crest was a bloody hand grasping a crown, from which they were denominated the Nials of the red arm, or "*Craobh-ruadh*." The armorial ensign of Connaught exhibited—party pearl-pale, argent and sable; on the argent side, a demi-eagle spread sable; and on the field, sable, a hand and arm holding a sword erect. The arms impressed on some of the coins of king Roderick, which are in the museum of Trinity College, Dublin, differed from the above as they represent Jupiter a Cavalier completely armed. According to Sir James Ware, Malachy, king of Meath, bore a banner of purple in 1014, at the battle of Clontarf, which represented a king enthroned in majesty, with a lily in his hand, in a field *Saturn*.

Leinster's coat of arms exhibited, on a field vert, an harp strung argent. At the tilts and tournaments held in the court of chivalry at Tara, the ensign that floated over the canopy of the monarch, displayed a bleeding hind, wounded by an arrow, under the arch of an old castle; but this flag was only unfurled at the chivalric games. The arms of McCarthy More, Prince of Desmond and Cork, were quartered on a Grecian shield, which was supported on either side by an ollamh and knight. The crest of this illustrious family was a globe surmounted by the harp and crown. Yellow, blue and purple were the royal colours of Ireland. O'Donohoe, the Prince of Kilarney, bore a crimson banner, on which were painted in green and gold, a crown supported by two foxes. But it is time to close a

detail that can only interest the antiquarian, who wishes to blow away the dust that obscures the brilliancy of the Milesian escutcheon, and to search the *Herculaneum* ruins of Irish history, for the antique gems and venerable monuments which lie buried in the *lava* of Danish and English devastation, and despotism.*

The nation enjoyed peace and prosperity under the wise and beneficent administration of SLANOLL; and his meekness and mildness endeared him to his subjects, from whose affections he was however torn by death, in the seventeenth year of his reign. A silly story is told by Dr. Keating, of this monarch's corpse having been disinterred, forty years after his demise, and found pure and uncorrupted, though no process of embalming had been used to preserve it.

Our history is silent respecting the art of embalming; so that we may conclude the ancient Irish did not resort to the Egyptian practice of preserving the form of their departed friends in the tomb.

GIEDE, surnamed *Oll-Glor-m-beal*, from his strong and sonorous voice, the youngest son of Ollamh Fodhla, ascended the throne of his departed brother, A. M. 3159. His reign was disturbed by the pretensions of Fiachadh, his nephew, who at length succeeded in his ambitious designs, and slew the monarch in a general engagement, which happened in the sixteenth year of his reign. FIACHADH III. after vanquishing and killing his uncle, assumed sovereign sway. As soon as the sceptre was within his grasp, he evinced a disposition to sit down under the laurels of his late victory, and cultivate the arts of peace. He erected a sumptuous palace at Kells, in the county of Meath, and became a liberal patron to commerce and agriculture.† He was the first monarch that caused wells to be opened,

* "In the grand banqueting hall at Tara, every nobleman's rank and dignity were known by the armorial bearings on his shield, which the Herald fixed on the wall exactly over the seat which he was to occupy at the feast. This regulation prevented all disputes about precedence, and marked the gradation of Princes, Nobles, and Gentlemen."—VALLANCEY.

† "KELLS is a large and respectable town, situated on the river Blackwater, in the county of Meath, at the distance of thirty-nine miles N. W. from Dublin. It was a place of consequence, as appears by Colgan's topography, before the birth of Christ; and several of the Irish monarchs resided there. Before the invasion of Henry II. Kells or Kenlis, which signifies the high fort, was part of the patrimony of the O'Finallans; but the Saxons dispossessed the original proprietors, and Henry bestowed Kells upon HUGO DE LACY, in 1173. De Lacy built a castle here, the ruins of which still remain. It was in this castle he entertained O'Rourke, Prince of Breffeny, when that chivalric chieftain came to remonstrate with the English Deputy on the aggressive incursions made by his soldiers, under Griffith, into the territories of east Meath. To settle the dispute that had arisen, O'Rourke, who justly dreaded treachery, insisted that Lacy, Fitzgerald and Griffith should repair with him to a hill in the vicinity of Kells, where he would alone confer, according to the custom of his ancestors. To this proposition, the English chiefs readily assented; but no sooner had the brave and noble minded O'Rourke opened the debate, than the three Englishmen seized him, and basely assassinated him on the spot. De Lacy afterwards bestowed Kells on his son-in-law, Gilbert Nugent, whose descendants in process of time became Earls of West Meath. In A. D. 550, St. Columba, the Irish apostle of Scotland, founded an abbey in Kells, for regular canons. This town was made an Episcopal see in the thirteenth century, when a cathedral was built in it by Walter Lacy, as well as an abbey for Crouched Friars, following the order of St. Augustine, whom he richly endowed, on condi-

and marble fountains for issuing spring water, to be built in Ireland. But he was not long suffered to repose in the tranquil shades of peace; as his cousin Bearngall, the son of his predecessor, regarding him as an usurper of his rights, kindled an insurrection which ended in the defeat and death of the monarch, A. M. 3196, after a reign of twenty years. The success of BEARNGALL at once avenged his father's death, and gave to him possession of the throne of Ireland.

As soon as he attained the summit of his ambition, he gave the rein to his despotic disposition. He banished all the adherents of his predecessor out of the kingdom; and in order to cut off all the pretenders to the crown, he commenced a fierce and tyrannic persecution against his relatives, who were of the posterity of Ith; and by terror and force succeeded in driving their chiefs to exile in Albania. But his despotism was gradually sapping the pillars of his own arbitrary power.

The rebellious arm of OLIOLL, the son of Slanoll, hurled him from the throne to the tomb, in the tenth year of his oppressive reign. OLIOLL, on ascending the throne, manifested a disposition to govern his people according to the behests of justice, and spirit of the constitution. But his intentions were blasted in the bud, in the twelfth year of his reign, by the tempest of insurrection, raised by SIORNA of the royal race of Heremon, who succeeded, once more, at the battle of Nobber,* in wresting the supreme power from the dynasty of Ollamh Fodhla. Olioll and all his leaders were killed in the engagement. Thus were the sage and benign ordinances and institutions of the great Ollamh Fodhla dissolved and subverted by civil broils, and the ruthless intrigues of ambition.

SIORNA, having obtained possession of a crown, in pursuit of which he had to wade through an ocean of blood, resolved therefore to hold

tion that they should for ever daily offer up a mass, in the churches of St. Mary, St. Columba, and St. Catharine, for his soul, and the soul of his wife.

In 1653, Thomas Taylor who was secretary to Sir William Petty, when the latter went to Ireland, to make what is called the "*Down Survey*," In 1660, Taylor purchased from Nugent, Lord Delvin, the town and vicinity of Kells. In 1713, his grandson, Robert Taylor was created a Baronet, by Queen Anne. In 1760, his son Thomas was raised to the peerage, by the title of Baron Headford in the county of Meath. His descendant is now Marquis of Headford. The fine mansion and beautiful domain of Headford, in the environs of Kells, present architectural grandeur, and charms of Sylvan scenery, that in beauty and landscape attractions, have few equals in Ireland, or any other country. In the Protestant church, we observed, a few years ago, a very beautiful monument, erected by Sir Thomas Taylor, in 1737 (we think) to the memory of his wife. It is a large Sarcophagus of grey Galway marble, resting on three eagles claws; from it springs a pedestal supporting an altar, rearing two Corinthian pillars, which sustain a Roman urn of Italian marble, exquisitely sculptured. About a mile beyond the town, in the commons of Lloyd, there is a very lofty tower erected by the late Earl of Bective, from the top of which a most extensive and diversified prospect can be commanded.

* NOBBER is a pretty rural village, in the county of Meath, which will be more famous in the records of genius, for giving birth to our great musical composer, CAROLAN, than it is in Irish history, for being the scene of a sanguinary battle.

The vicinity of Nobber is rendered beautiful and picturesque by the residences, and domains of Lord Gormanstown, at Whitewood, of General Bligh at Brittas, and of Mr. Cruise, at Cruisetown, where *Carolán* first borrowed inspiration from the lips of love, and gave his heart as a hostage to the captivating charms of *Bridget Cruise*.

in a tenacious tenure, the darling object that he gained with so much difficulty and danger. He, consequently, to secure the prize, adopted such measures as he and his advisers deemed best calculated for crushing faction, and guarding his throne from the hostile attacks of pretenders. This he could only accomplish by keeping constantly on foot a military force. Having assiduously endeavoured to ingratiate himself with the army, he soon became very popular among them. His military skill, and prepossessing manners, seemed to have destined him to command, while they served to give him a preponderating influence in the camp, and in the council. Against such a monarch, treason, for a while, durst not raise a menacing finger. At length, however, he was secretly apprised, that the *Irians*, or posterity of Ir, were sowing the seeds of disaffection in Ulster. Considering that a flame of sedition was more easily extinguished than a blaze of revolt, he quickly put himself at the head of his devoted army, and marched into Ulster. The Irian chiefs hearing of his approach, lost no time in concentrating their adherents, in order to put themselves in a bold defensive attitude, and oppose a formidable front to the hostile hosts, that threatened them with slavery and oppression.

The Irians made those preparations which a brave people, who prize their liberties dearer than life, ought to make to resist an invader who would only requite a tame submission, by yoking the abject dependants crouching to him, in the car of slavery. An engagement soon took place, at *Aras Keilter*, now Downpatrick;*

* DOWNPATRICK, the capital of the county of Down, is one of the most ancient cities in Ireland, and consequently its past glories make a distinguished figure in Irish history. The majestic and reverend ruins of its seven churches, and numerous abbeys proclaim its pristine greatness, and architectural grandeur. It was made a Bishop's see by St. Patrick, who built the large cathedral, A. D. 445, which is now a heap of hoary ruins, where only the owl chants the vesper anthem.

At his own request, expressed before his death, which memorable event happened on the 17th of March, 493, St. Patrick was buried in the chancel of this cathedral. His remains were afterwards enclosed in a magnificent tomb, erected by MURTAGH O'NIAL, monarch of Ireland, A. D. 500. To this tomb, to which several kings and queens made pilgrimages of devotion, and splendid gifts of piety, were subsequently transferred the remains of St. Columba, and St. Bridget, as the inscription which was read by Geraldus Cambrensis, in 1173, recorded.

*"Hi tres in Duno tumulo, tumultantur in uno,
Brigida, Patricius atque Columba Pius."*

Which has thus been translated by the celebrated Bishop Coyle.—

*"In Down three saints one grave doth fill,
Bridget, Patrick and Columb-Kille."*

The richness of the shrines of these saints attracted the rapacity of Turgesius, the cruel Danish tyrant, who defaced the monument, and carried off the ornaments and costly vessels of the sacred sepulchre, A. D. 851. When John De Courcey, captured Downpatrick, in 1186, he, to impress, more strongly, the Irish with an exalted idea of his sanctity, and of the reverence in which he held the relics of their saints, caused the tomb to be elegantly repaired, and embellished with all the beauties of architecture and sculpture. A solemn funeral service took place on this occasion, in the Cathedral, at which Cardinal Vivian, legate of the apostolic see; the Bishop of Armagh, his suffragans, as well as the Bishop of London, and many other ecclesiastical dignitaries assisted. Colgan and Harris say that this imposing religious ceremony, was the most sublime spectacle which had ever been witnessed in Ulster, and that it had the effect of multiplying the friends of the English amazingly in Ireland. In 1203, king John becoming jealous of the power

but in spite of the valour and intrepidity of the gallant Irians, the military genius of the king, and discipline of his troops gave him a decisive victory, which prostrated the hopes of the Ultonians. Flushed with success, and animated with ambition, the monarch then turned his arms against LOGAIRE, the son of Lughaidh, of the race of Heber, who with his forces, and a band of Carthaginians, his allies, were marching to the assistance of the Irians. This army, though strongly posted on a rocky eminence, which was swept on one side by the sea, in the neighbourhood of Killough,* he spiritedly

and popularity which DE COURCEY possessed in Ireland, issued a commission to Hugh De Burgo, and Walter De Lacy, to arrest De Courcey on a charge of high treason; but though they quickly proceeded to execute the gratifying orders of the king, with which they hoped to crush a rival, they could not effect their object without resorting to treachery. They succeeded, however, by bribes and promises to corrupt the fidelity of his followers and attendants. De Courcey was in the constant habit of offering up his prayers, every morning, in the Cathedral, before the shrine of St. Patrick. While he was one day in this act of devotion, De Burgo and Lacy, with a chosen band of assassins, attacked and killed some of his retinue. The brave unarmed chieftain seeing himself thus beset with danger, immediately, with his usual prowess, wrested a large wooden cross from the aisle, with which he so heroically defended himself, that he soon killed thirteen of his cowardly assailants; but at length he was overpowered by the strength of numerical force, and conveyed as a prisoner to London, where he was confined in the tower. In its proper place we shall relate more of the adventures of the illustrious Baron of Kinsale. The see of Down was united to that of Connor, in the county of Antrim, A. D. 1442, when the Bishop assumed the title of the Bishop of Down and Connor. Leonard Lord de Grey, while Lord Deputy of Ireland, plundered and profaned in 1538, the Cathedral of St. Patrick, which sacrilegious act was set forth in the articles of his impeachment, before he was beheaded, A. D. 1541. We will have occasion, in the course of this history, to speak often of Downpatrick,—for it has been the scene of important historical events. The ruins of the priory of Malachy, founded by Malachy O'Morgair, Bishop of Down, A. D. 1138, those of the priory of St. John the Baptist, erected by De Courcey, 1186, as well as those of an abbey of Cistercian monks, and a friary of the Franciscan order, are still remaining as evidences of the ancient piety, and architectural celebrity of Downpatrick. Its modern buildings are very creditable to the taste of its spirited inhabitants. The court house is a large and elegant Ionic structure.

Downpatrick is a large borough and market town, agreeably situated on the S. W. branch of the lake of Strangford, at the distance of ninety-four miles from Dublin. The environs of the town, are beautified with a pleasing variety of wood and water, and the houses and cultivated grounds that are interspersed through an extensive landscape of green hills, and pastoral glens, impart the vivid tints of the picturesque and romantic to the sylvan scene.

Adjoining the town there is one of those high Raths, or mounds, which are so common in Ireland;—its conical height is sixty-three feet, and its circumference is twenty-one hundred. It is circumvested with three concentric ramparts, one of which is thirty feet broad. We must not forget to mention, that the noble vestiges of SAUL monastery, which was the favorite abode of St. Patrick, are still to be seen near the town. There is a limpid well springing up through a rock, at this monastery, which tradition records, was excavated by the Saint's own hands. On every Patrick's day, the peasantry of Down, came a great distance to drink, what they consider, the miraculous water of the holy well.

* KILLOUGH stands on the north of St. John's Point, in the bay of Strangford. It has the advantage of a fine commodious harbour, where large ships can safely ride quite close to the quay. It is a neat flourishing town, where trade and industry accumulate wealth for the inhabitants. Their fish market is one of the best in Ireland. There is a remarkable well here, called St. Scordin's; and its water cannot be equalled for pellucidness, or lightness. It gushes out of a high rocky bank, like streams of dissolved crystal. Killough is also celebrated for a rocky oblong cavern, from whence, at the ebbing and flowing of the tide, a strange noise is heard, somewhat resembling the sound of a huntsman's horn.

In the neighbourhood of this town, there are some pretty domains and country

attacked, and succeeded in dislodging them. The Carthaginian chief, Ciasral, was killed in the conflict by the king's hand, and many of his soldiers, in their endeavour to escape to their shipping, were drowned.

After these exploits, which reflected such glory on his arms, the monarch returned in triumph to Tara. But to prove the instability of royal power, and that the firmest throne rests but on a slippery foundation, Siorna was slain while attempting to quell a revolt in Meath by his successor, *Aillin Rotheachta*, in the twenty-first year of his reign. Our historians have warmly lauded the wisdom, prudence, and eminent martial talents of Siorna. He was designated *Saoghalach*, or the long-lived, from his having, if we can credit the book of Lecan, attained the great age of one hundred and fifty years.

ROTHEACHTA II. was proclaimed sovereign; but not by the voice of the people, who were warmly attached to the person and government of the late king, whose death they deeply bewailed. To Rotheachta II. our historians attribute the invention of war-chariots, which throws a great halo of memorable notoriety on the era of his reign, A. M. 3244. These superb chariots, being winged with sharp scythes and grappling hooks, were calculated to do dreadful execution in battle. We have already alluded to the expertness and bravery of the Irish charioteers, and knights, who fought with long spears in these kind of chariots. The Gauls, in the year of Rome, 456, employed Irish artists to build war-chariots for them, which they subsequently and effectually employed against the Romans, as Cæsar tells us.

After a reign of seven years, distinguished by the progress of the arts, and the blessings of peace, Rotheachta was killed by lightning, while hunting in the forest of Tara.

villas, among the most attractive of which, are the ornamented manor, and magnificent and superb mansion of Lord Clifford. Here we have admired—

“The cultur'd garden, richly grac'd,
With all the labored charms of taste;
The calm deep grove, the limpid tide,
The verdant mead, and landscape wide.”

Balee and *Hollymount* have also rural fascinations, that have been consecrated by the voice of song, and celebrated by the pencil of genius.

CHAPTER XI.

Reflections on the dissensions and intestine commotions of the ancient Irish ;—their true cause defined. The reigns of Elim, Giallach, and Art. The ancient mode of fortification. Reigns of Nuadh, Breasrigh, and Eochaidh IV. The intercourse between Ireland and Carthage in ancient times. The accession of Fion, Seadhna II. Simon-Breac, Duach, and Muiredheach, to the Irish throne. The reign of Eadhna II. and a dissertation on the mines and minerals of Ireland.

The reader who has honoured the preceding chapters of this history, with a perusal, must have been surprised at the fatal feuds and bloody strife that scattered the unnatural and sanguinary miseries and calamities of civil war through Ireland, for a period of near three centuries. But though the gloomy records of those internal divisions, and melancholy discords, detail events that shock and sicken humanity, they are not still without numerous parallels in the history of every other nation in Europe. This assertion is raised by Voltaire, Hume, Robertson, and Sir Walter Scott, to a pinnacle of truth, which is too elevated for the assaults of objection. These historians furnish us with horrid recitals, equalling certainly, in the cruelty and barbarity which they unfold, the most atrocious deeds that stain our annals, of their Princes murdering each other, in order to succeed to sovereign power. We find the royal rivals of Scotland and England, even in comparatively enlightened periods, guilty of inhuman enormities and stupendous wickedness, in their sanguinary career, to the gaol of regal authority, which surpass the blackest and most barbarous crimes that have been imputed by history, to the heathen kings of Ireland. The ancient Irish princes were idolatrous worshippers of military glory and heroic courage; these were the divinities to whom they sacrificed the love of life, and every selfish consideration. For the moment a chieftain betrayed a symptom of pusillanimity in the martial field, he was debased; his name was obliterated from the emblazoned record of the valiant, and the herald broke his escutcheon and trampled his banner in the dust, in the presence of all his companions in arms. To evade this degradation, the chivalric Milesians entered the field of battle fully resolved to conquer their adversaries, or fall in the struggle covered with glory; as life without victory was not, in their opinion, worth preserving. To outlive the blaze of heroic fame, after being extinguished by defeat, was counted infamous, so that none of the Milesian Princes survived the loss of a battle.

The Irish Princes scorned to enjoy existence encumbered with the reproach of being vanquished; consequently, with a view of consecrating their posthumous fame to the "light of song," they always fought with the most desperate resolution and valour. "A coward," says DR. WARNER, "was looked upon among the Irish, as the most ignominious of all characters; and the opinion of their chieftains, of martial valour, which was carried to the highest pitch of enthusiasm, made it extremely difficult to bring about a reconciliation after a quarrel. For each party dreaded the name of a

dastard, if they made the first overtures of peace, so no overtures were made at all, but the quarrel continued from father to son, and very seldom ended but with the entire extinction of one of the families."

Indeed our chieftains were always distinguished for their "longing after immortality," and considered military fame as the only badge of honour and eminence; and hence they circumscribed their system of politics and religion, within the compass of a short but an emphatic motto, on their banners, "GLORY IS PREFERABLE TO THE WORLD!"* Still their wars were not the conflicts of savage barbarians, in which no character can be traced except those of revenge, havoc, and perfidy; no, they exhibited in their fights magnanimous feats of chivalry, and displayed that heroic courage which is too generous to yield to resentment, or stoop to the ignoble revenge of trampling on a prostrate foe.

But even if we had no proofs on record, to attest this chivalric prodigality of existence, the calumnies of Hume and Macpherson, would still evidently militate against the deductions of reason, and the testimony of universal history, when they endeavour to fasten on the memory of our ancestors the degrading imputation of "*savage barbarity*," and to caricature our heroes as little-minded assassins, like their own Richards, Henries, and Macbeths.† The rival pre-

* Constitutional pride, joined to innate bravery, seem to have been EVER the characteristics of the Irish nation. This pride, constantly fed by the poems of the bards, and by the reflection of their high antiquity and noble blood, made them at all times, even to our own days, ready to sacrifice every other consideration to it. The unhappy differences that first broke out in Ireland, in the very infancy of the Milesian government, were constantly kept alive from the same cause. The line of Heber, as being the elder branch of the Milesian stock, imagined they had an exclusive right to the Irish monarchy. The other branches of the posterity of Heremon contended, on the contrary, that in a government where superior abilities were ever preferred to lineal succession, their claims were unexceptionable; as it is often the case in private quarrels between people equally brave and proud, neither will recede; so with these, it would be deemed infamy in any successor to recede in the least from the pretensions of his house, or to omit any opportunity of enforcing them.

Yet even in these civil commotions (generally the most sanguinary) there were observed a conduct peculiarly striking, which seemed to elevate their characters beyond those of their neighbouring nations. In a word, not to multiply instances, but a *single example* occurs in the whole of our history, of a Prince's surviving the loss of his diadem, and this was Malachy II. in the commencement of the eleventh century!—Thus the death of the unsuccessful competitor, instead of being a stain on our annals, only higher blazons the national character of the Irish Princes. Add to this that ancient history in general, shows that few gallant Princes died peaceable deaths, which gave occasion to the remarks of Juvenal:—

"Ad generum Cercris, sine caede et vulnere pauci

Descendunt reges, et sicca morte tyranni." O'HALLORAN.

† The Scottish historians look at Irish failings through the false telescope of prejudice; they paint our virtues on miniature medallions, and our vices on broad canvass. They point out the mote in our eyes, while they forget having beams in their own. The path which led to the throne of modern Scotland, was as often washed with the blood, and paved with the carcasses of kings, as that of Ireland, as the following evidence will testify:—

"The nobles were often mutinous, revengeful, and ungovernable; so that they were apt to forget the duty which they owed their sovereign, and to aspire beyond the rank of subjects. Never was any race of monarchs so unfortunate as the Scottish. Of six successive Princes, from Robert III. to James VI. not *one died a natural death*."—ROBERTSON.

tensions of the dynasties of **HEBER** and **HEREMON**, we must admit, like the feuds of the Houses of York and Lancaster, were for many centuries, the prolific and pestiferous source of desolation and discord in Ireland; and their jealousies and fatal disunion, not only frequently deluged the country in blood, but ultimately so debilitated her power that she was humiliated to the degradation of bending the knee of obeisance before the throne of a foreign conqueror. The posterity of **Heber**, as the elder branch of the Milesian race, claimed a prior right to the sovereign prerogative; while the house of **Here-mon** proudly rested its permanent claims, not only on the rights of blood but on the legitimate and indefeasible right of conquest, so that this indiscernible basis of the **Heremonian** pretensions to the Irish throne, remained unmoved amidst the tempestuous surges of ages, like the solid and majestic rocks, that raise their ponderous cliffs above the raging waves of the ocean, until intestine treason and foreign invasion dissolved the monarchy of Ireland, in 1172. Thus fell the glories of the **O'Neil**—thus did ruthless discord crumble their throne sceptre into dust! The voice of the patriotic bard no longer kindles the soul of the Irish brave, nor hurries them to the field of fame, while burning with the inspiration of freedom. Ah, no! The soul-lifting muse of **MOORE**, the patriotic genius of **LADY MORGAN**, and the heart-moving eloquence of **SHIEL**, cannot awake the “dreamless” sleep of the tomb. The stars of the red-branch have fallen; the sun of our glory is set, and the battles of the Irish brave have terminated in English subjugation!

The reader will pardon a digression into which we were led by our desire to wipe away, as far as our humble efforts can, the reproach which foreign historians have endeavoured to fasten on the memory of our ancestors. We wish to vindicate the conduct of those who cannot speak for themselves, and extenuate their imputed faults by the enumeration of the causes which produced them. But let us return to our annals.

ROTHEACHTA II. having been killed by a flash of lightning, as related in the conclusion of our last chapter, his son **ELIM** ascended the throne of his ancestors. Our annalists furnish us with no particulars of the reign of this prince, except that he was cut off by the sword of his successor **GIALlachA**, before he had terminated the first year of his sovereign sway. **GiallachA**, who was a brave and enlightened Prince, governed the country with prudence and justice, for nine years; at the termination of which period, he fell in an engagement with **ART**, the son of **Elim**. **ART**, on taking possession of the throne, assured the estates at **Tara**, that he was determined to rule over his people in such a manner as would endear him to their affections. The commencement of his reign afforded proofs of the sincerity of his professions, and every act of his administration demonstrated the warmth of his solicitude for the prosperity of the nation. Under his auspices, the arts began to revive, and the spirit of the monarch seemed to have animated the whole national mind. Agriculture filled the fields with the gifts of **Ceres** and **Pomona**: education expanded the powers of the mind, and architecture beautified the country with military and civil structures.

It was in the reign of this Prince, that fortifications were first introduced in Ireland. Positions formed by nature for advantageous military stations, were surrounded by ramparts and deep trenches, and on an eminence in the area, was raised a high mound, or fort, called the *Rath*. Near the Rath were the barracks for the soldiers, constructed of wood and clay, and under it was a cave formed of stone, in which deep wells were dug to supply the garrison with water in case of seige. Another species of fortification was also invented by this monarch for the security of his armies and kingdom. The *Dun* was a rocky eminence, which was enclosed by entrenchments formed of large rough stones, and mounds of earth, of a square or oval form. The name of *Dun* was given by the ancient Irish to any entrenchment, whose area within was raised high, in order that their archers and slingers might annoy an enemy more advantageously from its summit. All these military stations were supplied with spring water by subterraneous aqueducts. Our historians do not tell us the number of fortifications he caused to be erected; but there is no doubt that in aftertimes the Rathes, Duns, and *Babhans*,* were multiplied to a numerous aggregate, as we believe there are ten of these immense mounds in every county in Ireland. From his taste in military architecture, and his skill in hydraulics, he was called *Imlioch*, or the source of water. But all his improvements in the arts, or all his parental justice in governing the nation, could not secure him from the arm of revolt. In the twelfth year of his reign, NUADH FIONN-FAIL, of the race of Heremon, raised the banner of insurrection, and succeeded in depriving the magnanimous Art of his life and crown, at the battle of Rathlin, A. M. 3273.

NUADH FIONN-FAIL, after gaining the crown, displayed nothing in his administration of fourteen years, of any moment. But at the end of that period he was roused from his sluggish apathy by the rebellion of BREASRIGH, the grand-son of Art. The competitors, as usual, decided their pretensions to the throne by the issue of a sanguinary battle, in which the reigning monarch was vanquished and slain.

AS soon as BREASRIGH was invested with regal authority, he adopted every measure of prudence and policy to secure the stability of his government. He augmented his army, and erected many new fortresses in different parts of the kingdom, in order to be prepared for the attack of either a domestic or a foreign foe. In the fourth year of his reign, a considerable armament of Cathaginians

* "The *Babhan* was a defile or pass, secured with thick ditches of earth, impaled with wooden stakes, or the branches of trees, and surrounded with a deep trench, over which there was a draw-bridge. The *Baghail* was an inclosure, constructed of large posts and wicker-work to surround their camps and secure them from surprise: this species of military architecture, as well as the *Ingleidh*, which were barriers of large trees thrown across the roads, in order to obstruct the progress of an enemy, originated in the first century. The *mote* or *motha* was the entrenchment which encircled the *Dun*: whence *mothar* in modern Irish signifies an enclosed park, and *motha* a mound. The *Ban* was the rampart which enclosed the *Dun*, and generally situated within the *mote*. The *Uagh* was the cave or cellar where the provisions were kept, and where the garrison retired in case of danger. Many of these caves are still to be seen in Ireland."—*Hist. of the rise and progress of military architecture in Ireland, Vol. II. page 158.*

invested the northern coasts, and ravaged many districts of Ulster. These enterprising people, at length growing bold with success, and more avaricious of increasing their booties, made excursions far into the interior of the country. The Irish monarch, collecting all his forces at Tara, speedily marched to the camp of the invaders, which he stormed, and after encountering a brave resistance from the foe, he succeeded in expelling them to their ships. The arms and spoils which he captured in the Carthaginian camp, were of immense value. The victorious monarch returned in triumph to Tara, where he caused the people and the army to join in celebrating his success by the exhibition of public games, processions, and festivities. After these events, no occurrence of historical note happened until the ninth year of his reign, when an insurrection, planned by Eochaidh IV. of the line of Ith, summoned him to the martial field of *Carnchluain*, in Meath, where he fell by the sword of his successor. The reign of Eochaidh IV. which lasted but one year, forms a memorable epoch in our annals, by the destructive plague that then visited Ireland, and swept away half its population. But fearful and fatal as the epidemic calamity was, it did not still deter ambition from aspiring to the crown.

FIONN, the son of Bratha, of the dynasty of Ir, collected a force, with which he attacked and defeated the monarch, who fell in the first engagement with his rival, A. M. 3297. The conqueror Fionn, after a reign of twenty years, undistinguished in history, was in his turn slain in battle, by his successor, SEADHNA JONORAICE, who mounted the throne, A. M. 3318. He received the appellation of *Jonoraice*, in consequence of his being the first monarch of Ireland that regulated the fixed pay of the army by a royal ordinance. He was a prince eminent for his literary, as well as his military talents. The treatise which he wrote on military discipline and tactics, was as remarkable for the graces of its style, as for the depth of martial knowledge, that pervaded that admired composition, which remained for ages subsequently, as a standard of military jurisprudence, for the Irish army.

He caused many forges to be established for the fabrication of arms, after the fashion of the lances and swords of the Carthaginians. Many of the swords of this fabric, which have been found in several bogs in Ireland, bore such an exact and surprising similarity to those discovered buried in the plains of Cannae, and now deposited in the British Museum, that several learned antiquarians before whom both swords have been assayed and analyzed, have declared that they must have come from the same mint. "They are," says the report of the London Assay Master, A. D. 1789, "a mixture of copper, iron, and zinc. They take an exquisite fine polish, and carry a very sharp edge, and are firm and elastic. They are so peculiarly formed, as to resist any kind of rust, as appears by two presented by Lord Milton, which were dug up in the bog of Cullen, county of Dublin, after lying there for many ages."*

* "Sir Lawrence Parsons, in his learned and elegant defence of the ancient history of Ireland, observes, that at an early period of the world, the Phœnicians made a settlement in Ireland, and immediately, or by degrees, completely subjuga-

Notwithstanding the beneficial institutions of Seadhna, and the justice of his government, he was doomed to experience the same fate as his royal predecessors, with the memorable exception that the manner of his death was signally different and unprecedentedly cruel and inhuman. He was, while unarmed, taken by surprise, by SIMON BREAC, or the speckled, who, with a refinement of cruelty equal to the barbarity of him who stretched his victim on his lacerating bed, caused the unhappy monarch's limbs to be rent asunder by a machine, which he had constructed to gratify his diabolical vengeance.

This sanguinary and relentless tyrant, after an oppressive reign of six years, was totally defeated by DUACH, the son of Seadhna, who, in accordance with the laws of retributive justice, inflicted on him the same species of torture, to which the despot had consigned his father.

DUACH'S accession to the throne was hailed by the unanimous approbation of the nation, and during a peaceable, prosperous, and salutary reign of ten years, he evinced all the royal virtues that can shed lustre on a throne, or give additional eminence to regal station. But neither the magnanimity of his conduct, nor the amiability of his disposition had, in the hour of revolt, any avail in averting the arm of aspiring ambition. MUIREDHEACH, the son of the tyrant Simon, overthrew and killed the monarch in an engagement, A. M. 3354.

MUIREDHEACH mounted the throne in direct opposition to the wishes of the Irish people, who dreaded that he would follow in the despotic and sanguinary career of his arbitrary father;—but fortunately ere he had time to give the rein of absolute sway to his tyrannic inclinations, he fell a sacrifice to the just vengeance of EADHNA II. the son of DUACH, “the good monarch,” as he was emphatically denominated by the voice of the nation.

ed the country, and established in the Island their laws, religion, and language :—this elegant writer supports his hypothesis by observing, that the Carthaginians originally came from Phœnicia and spoke the Phœnician language; that a specimen of that language has been preserved by Plautus, in one of his plays, which contains some speeches of Hanno, a Carthaginian, in the language of his country, which he says, appears, upon examination, to be the same dialect as the Irish.

In further corroboration of the eastern origin of the Irish, the discovery of Carthaginian swords in the bogs of Ireland has been adduced. General Campbell is in possession of one of the swords found near Armagh :—it is made of brass, about twenty inches long, two inches broad, having small holes in the handle, supposed to have been perforated for the purpose of admitting thongs to be fastened to them; which size and marks correspond precisely with the swords found on the plains of Cannæ, as I have been informed by an intelligent friend, who had an opportunity of comparing the former with the latter, which he saw in several of the museums in Italy. The facts are curious, and the deductions are, at least, ingenious.”

Stranger in Ireland.

“Governor Pownall, in his account of Irish antiquities, read before the English antiquarian society, in 1774, compared some old Irish swords found at a great depth, in the bog of Allen, with those in the British Museum, and was surprised at their likeness and exact correspondence in formation and metal.”—VALLANCEY.

“But as our annals particularly remark on the abundance of mines and minerals in our country, and the ingenuity of our artists, the candid reader will agree with me, I think, that the *Carthaginians imported their swords from us in the course of traffic*, as Ireland was in this reign, unequalled for the elegant fabric of arms.”

Ó'HALLORAN.

EADHNA-Dearg, (or the *red*, which he was called from his fresh and ruddy complexion) assumed sovereign authority under the most flattering auspices; the remembrance of his father's virtues prepossessioned all classes in his favour, and rendered him the object of national reverence and regard. The subsequent conduct of the monarch indeed realized the brilliant hopes of the people, and convinced them that he inherited the amiable qualities of his royal sire, as well as his crown and honours.

To this monarch our historians impute the invention of current coin in Ireland. They state that he caused a mint to be erected at Ross, in the county of Wexford,* where vast quantities of gold and silver bullion were melted down in the royal crucibles. Ireland abounded with mines of gold and silver, in ancient times, as the various crowns, shields, goblets, and armour of these precious metals, which have been discovered in different parts of the kingdom, demonstrate, with a force of evidence that cannot be impeached.†

We are told by Sir James Ware, that in the year 1639, an urn full of the coins of this monarch, were discovered in a Druidical cave, in the county of Wicklow. These coins were of silver, and as large as an English shilling; on one side was the impression of the

* The village of Ross, which has dwindled to decay, is beautifully situated on the confluence of the rivers Suire and Barrow, in the county of Wexford, at the distance of 89 miles from Dublin. The country here is romantic and picturesque, and the prospect that the traveller, who ascends *Faithleg* hill, can command of Waterford harbour, Tramore bay, Duncannon fort, Ballyhack, and Passage, new Ross, and the extensive chain of mountains of Tipperary, Wicklow, Kilkenny, Carlow, and the Kings' and Queens' County, brings within a charming *coup d'oeil*, as interesting a landscape as Italy can present. There are several monastic ruins in Ross, particularly those of the abbey of St. Augustine, erected by Sir John Devereux, A. D. 1213. Near Ross, at Tintern, are also the magnificent remains of the abbey which the Earl of Pembroke founded in 1200. The rich possessions of this abbey were granted by Queen Elizabeth to Colonel Gore, whose descendants afterwards were created Earls of Ross. Ross was the scene of the sanguinary conflict between the deluded but brave insurgents of 1798, and the royal army, in which more than 2,000 human beings lost their lives!

† In many of the Irish bogs have been discovered numerous and ponderous ornaments of gold and silver, such as *fibulae*, clasps, buckles, bracelets, anklets, sandals, frontlets, lunettes, tankards, trumpets, weapons, and cups, several of which are of elegant workmanship, and give a high idea of the wealth, skill and taste of the ancient Irish."—*Stranger in Ireland*.

"Herodotus affirms that the Carthaginians effected a landing in a remote *Atlantic Isle*, and established a colony in it; and that vast quantities of gold, silver, and precious stones, were exported annually from it to the parent city."—LYNCH.

"There can be no doubt of the early use of trade and of money in Ireland, into which it is probable it was introduced, as soon as it was frequented by the Phœnicians. Before the reign of *Eochaidh IV.* the Irish made their payments of gold and silver in bars and ingots, with which their rich mines supplied them."—*Antiquities of Wales, Vol. I. p. 181.*

"The massy gold and silver chalices, candlesticks, plate, utensils, ornaments, and images of saints, seized by the crown, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, in the Irish abbeys, brought more than one million sterling to the exchequer."—CAMDEN.

"In ancient times, gems must have been abundant in Ireland, as some golden crowns lately found in digging in bogs, were enriched with large rubies, topazes, amethysts and sapphire pebbles of great value."—*Irish Geology, London Edition, 1797, page 59.*

"Long before the birth of Christ, the Irish had stamped money, and their artists seem to have been as unrivalled in the fabrication of metals, as they confessedly were in lignarian architecture, and martial music."—BISHOP NICHOLSON.

monarch's head, and on the reverse, Hibernia bearing in her hand the wand entwined with a serpent. Some of these coins are preserved in the cabinets of the antiquarians, and two of them are to be seen in the museum of the university of Dublin.

In 1812, some men who were digging in a field in *Glanmire*,* a fairy valley, in the county of Cork, found an ancient gold coin, as large as a guinea, which, by the inscription, appeared to have been coined in the reign of CATHAIR, who was monarch of Ireland, A. D. 151. The impression on one side was a human head encircled with a knight's helmet, and on the reverse, a war-horse gorgeously caparisoned. We believe that this valuable antique is at present in the hands of the Earl of Shannon. Every writer since the days of Gerald Barry, who visited our country, has admitted that her soil is stored with the most precious mines, and minerals. In ancient times, it will be seen, these mines were industriously explored and worked with unwearied spirit; the cause of their long neglect is owing to the studied misgovernment, and aggressive system of monopoly, to the

* Having occasion to speak of the romantic vale of Glanmire, in the text, we think we will enliven the interest of historical narrative, by giving a topographical sketch of it to our readers. The pastoral valley of GLANMIRE is situated three miles east of the city of Cork; a meandering rivulet, after gliding smoothly through its flower spangled meadows, drops its tributary streams into the harbour. In this secluded glen, where Byron would love to woo the epic muse, and Petrarch to whisper the soft words of passion to his Laura, are interspersed two rural villages, upper and lower Glanmire, the latter of which, seated on gentle acclivities, rising above the head of the creek, at the distance of a mile from its conflux with the harbour, present landscape features, which a Poussin might contemplate with delight. Surrounded on all sides by an assemblage of verdant hills, garnished with wood, they form every rural and picturesque variety that can unite in the composition of a pleasing sylvan scene. In some places appear narrow glens, the bottoms of which are filled with pellucid water, whilst the steep emerald banks are draped with an umbrageous tapestry of variegated tints, that throw a foliaceous shade over these grassy sofas, which the solar beams cannot penetrate. In other parts, the vale opens to form the site of a pretty cheerful village overhung by impending hills and undulating woods, from whence the green shore gradually rises into large enclosures, speckled with white houses, like pearls set in emerald. In this charming retreat, where a pilgrim might give up his soul to holy musings, and a hermit look with contempt on the vanities and pleasures of the busy world, are several elegant villas, especially *Lota*, which stands at the termination of a fine vista, looking towards Cork, formed by rows of elm and beech trees. Before this solitary Tusculanum, is a fine, flower-gemmed lawn, fringed by a 'garniture of groves,' while the improved pleasure grounds in the rear, consisting of a domain of one hundred acres, add a new and attractive beauty to the *tout ensemble* of the landscape, and form a fine and imposing accompaniment to the sylvan woods and lawns of Dunkettle, Richmond, and Ballyroshien, on the opposite banks of the creek.

The town of Glanmire contains about fifty houses, and a church, which was originally built by John Roche, A. D. 1349. In the cemetery of this church, which serves for the sepulchral ground of the deceased of the whole parish of Caherly, is an elegant monument of white marble; commemorative of the virtues of Archdeacon CORKER, who died rector of this parish in 1789. On the sarcophagus of the tomb, in full *basso-relievo*, is a female figure weeping over a sepulchral urn placed on a Roman pedestal, the dodo of which bears a medallion of the Archdeacon; under this, on a shield, are the arms of the deceased, beautifully sculptured, and above, in an oval compartment, within a wreath of laurel, is the inscription.

Glanmire and the whole district of country thence to Youghal, belonged originally to the Irish sept of the O'Lehans, who were dispossessed of their patrimonial inheritance, by the Barries, who were officers under Strongbow.

evils of which England has doomed Ireland for ages ;—but we hope that HE who broke the chain of religious restriction, will still farther entitle himself to the ETERNAL GRATITUDE of his country, and form a new epoch in her history, by instigating a research after the treasures that are immured in her mountains and plains, and draw from the bowels of the earth, those hidden sources of national wealth, to enrich the proprietary of the soil, extend commerce, promote the arts, give a spirit to industry, check emigration to strange climes ; and to supply the exigencies of the empire. This glorious task, we fondly hope, DANIEL O'CONNELL is yet destined to accomplish.

Ireland, which was once distinguished for her agricultural operations, and excellence in the cultivation of the arts, as for her renown in arms, and fame in literature, has, by a fatal concatenation of internal discord, and English policy, been thrown back a century behind many countries which were immersed in barbarism, at a proud era, when she was the great emporium of commerce—the luminary of science, and the school in whose splendid focus were concentrated those radiant beams of philosophy and religion, which dispelled the darkness that brooded over European intellect, in the fifth and sixth centuries. We trust, however, that English policy, can no longer wield the arms of injustice against the prosperity of Ireland, or bring the repercussive lever of monopoly to bear upon her interest and welfare. Too long, alas ! it has been her fated and marked destiny, to be, in most public concerns, either cajoled by pretenders, defrauded by knaves, or distracted by chimerical demagogues, in the delusive guise of prudent patriots. But at last, thank Heaven ! the able, skilful, and disinterested pilot, O'CONNELL, has steered the storm-shattered bark out of the shoals and quicksands of 1798, and the breakers and eddies of the disastrous epoch of 1803. In addition to the metallic and mineral productions, on which we have already descanted, Ireland is pregnant with coal, iron, lead, and copper mines, and the celebrity of her noble quarries of marble is known to every intelligent reader.

The most beautiful specimens of this architectival and sculptural material, are found in the counties of Waterford, Kilkenny, Galway, and Meath. Blocks of great magnitude, of jet black marble, susceptible of the finest polish, are raised out of the quarries of Waterford : the characteristics of the Kilkenny marble are hardness, and brilliancy of streaks, which peculiarly adapt it for the purposes of ornamental architecture ; the Galway production is distinguished for its pure whiteness, as well as for the massy magnitude of the ponderous pillars it has furnished to some of the most elegant colonnades in the kingdom ; the Meath marble, of the famous quarry of Ardraccan, near the town of Navan,* is esteemed the best in the kingdom for

* NAVAN, a considerable town in the county of Meath, 29 miles from Dublin, is pleasantly situated on the conflux of the rivers Boyne and Blackwater, in the midst of a rich and picturesque country, whose scenery is diversified with baronial castles, monastic ruins, and waving forests.

Navan was a place of great note in ancient times. Malachy, king of Meath, erected an abbey here, A. D. 1008, and after the invasion, Hugh De Lacy erected and endowed another monastery in this town, which is now a heap of ruins, as is that which was built by Jocelyn Nangle, and dedicated to the holy virgin, in the

building; it is of a beautiful dove colour, and when polished, it developes a variety of tints and veins. Kildare House, formerly the princely residence of the Duke of Leinster, but now the Royal Dublin Society house, the Provost's mansion at Trinity College, and the Richmond Asylum, are the Dublin edifices built of this marble.

But it is high time that we should conclude our episode and resume the thread of our historical narrative. The brilliant reign of EADHNA II. which was faithfully devoted to the patriotic task of promoting the happiness and prosperity of the people, terminated in its twelfth year, when the monarch fell a victim to the plague. The death of this wise and beneficent Prince, was deeply bewailed by the whole nation, which regarded him with reverential affection and enthusiastic devotion.

CHAPTER XII.

The reigns of Lughaidh, Sior-Laimh, Eochaidh V.—Naval Architecture in Ireland.—Naval exploits at Dundalk.—The reigns of Eochaidh VI. and his brother Conuing, or Lughaidh, and Art II.—The reigns of Fiacha, Olioll, and Airgeadmhar.—The accession of Eochaidh VII., or Duach, and of Lughaidh III. to the Irish Throne.

PRINCE LUGHAIDH, the eldest son of Eadhna, the late monarch, mounted the throne of his ancestors without opposition, A. M. 3397. He is distinguished in the royal genealogy of Ireland, by the surname of *Jardhoinn*, which signifies, in Irish, the dark brown haired Prince. This Prince had a soul inflamed by military ardour, and a passion for glory; and no sooner had he grasped the sceptre of power, than he promptly resolved to carry his bold ambitious projects into execution. He raised a formidable army, with which he marched into Ulster, for the avowed purpose of compelling the Prince of that Province to pay him the usual tribute. The Ultonian chieftain, considering the demand unwarrantable, appealed to his people, who, at his call, rose, *en masse*, to resist the aggressive invader. A desultory system of warfare, attended by various success, was carried on for years between the belligerents; but at length, Prince Sior-LAIMH, (or the long-handed) of the house of Ir, an aspirant to the supreme monarchy, warmly espoused the cause of the Ultonians, and soon

twelfth century. In the cemetery of the latter, are the remains of many ancient tombs, whose sculptural decorations present several figures in *alto-relievo*. On every side of this domain-encircled town, the romantic banks of the Boyne and Blackwater are embellished with the castles of Ludlow, Liscarton, (the birth-place of the celebrated Lord Cadogan) Athlumny, Dunmore, as well as several other mansions, among the most elegant of which is the palace of the Bishop of Meath, at Ardraccan; which combines with classic taste, the beauty and lightness of Ionic architecture. The marble that composes its pillared portico and lofty pediment, was raised out of the famous quarry in its vicinity. This superb structure was built by Bishop Maxwell, in 1789, on the ruins of the old cathedral, for Ardraccan was a Bishop's see, until the tenth century. The modern cathedral of the Bishopric of Meath, stands near the prelate's residence; but it is a plain building of no architectural grandeur.

turned the tide of fortune in their favour. LUGHADH was vanquished in several skirmishes, and obliged to retreat to CLOGHER,* in the county of Tyrone. Scarcely had he encamped here, ere he was attacked by SIOR-LAIMH, at the head of the Ultonians. The battle, as usual, was fierce and desperate, and after a heroic resistance, in which the courage and valour of the monarch, shone with the brilliant splendour of Milesian chivalry, victory, notwithstanding, declared itself for the Ultonians. The monarch and his principal officers, fell in this sanguinary and decisive conflict. The victorious Sior, after rewarding his Ultonian allies for their spirit and bravery proceeded to Tara, where the Arch-Druid placed the crown upon his head. During the whole period of his reign, this monarch missed no opportunity of oppressing the descendants of Heber ; but, at length, the sword of EOCHADH, the son of Lughaidh, of the dynasty of Heber, terminated his life in battle, in the seventeenth year of his regal sway. The victor, EOCHADH UNARCHEAS, or Eochaidh of the ships, was solemnly inaugurated monarch on the stone of destiny, at Tara, A. M. 3392. The appellation of *Unarcheas* was bestowed upon this Prince, because during his warfare with his predecessor, Sior, he was frequently obliged to embark his forces on board of small skiffs, or Currachs, rudely constructed of wattles and horse-hides, which enabled him in the most stormy seasons, to escape to his large vessels, which hovered round the coast, from the pursuit of the royal army.

That Ireland, even in those early days, had ships of magnitude and elegant naval architecture, cannot be denied by any one that reflects on the fact, that the art of ship-building was carried to perfection by the early Milesians, who had ships of as great tonnage as the Carthaginians. TACITUS is a conclusive evidence, to demonstrate the fact of our having large fleets at those periods, when the still bosom of the ocean had not yet been furrowed by the keel of a British bark. But the species of small boats of which we have spoken, were found more useful in facilitating the landing of troops on insular stations, or in hurrying their embarkation, in creeks or shallows, so as to escape the pursuing foe, than vessels of heavier burden. We are told by Cæsar, that he employed cribs, or *currachs*, in transporting his soldiers over the rivers in Spain. In the days of this Prince, (EOCHADH) Ireland, Carthage, and Egypt, were the three greatest maritime powers in the world.

* CLOGHER, is a considerable town, agreeably situated on the winding rivers of Launy in the county of Tyrone, at a distance of 104 miles from Dublin. St. Patrick made Clogher a Bishop's See, A. D. 467, and ordained St. Mac Cartin, the companion of his travels, as well as his fellow labourer in the vineyard of Christianity, the first prelate of it. Our national Apostle remained two years in Clogher, to superintend the erection of the Cathedral, and of the abbey, which he dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Cathedral is still in fine preservation, having undergone within the last century, several repairs ; but in 1396, the abbey was reduced by fire to the heap of ruins, that now remains as the monument and sepulchre of its former architectural grandeur. The tomb of the M'Kennas, the ancient chieftains of Trough, stands in one of the aisles. James I. by a royal grant, made to George Montgomery, Bishop of Clogher, invested this see with all the lands which belonged originally to the abbey.

The suburbs of this town are enriched and embellished with the mansion and domains of the Bishop, and Dean of Clogher, and the sylvan groves of Fordross and Lisborvic, serve to impart additional tints of beauty to the landscape.—AUTHOR.

Bede has honorably admitted, in his Ecclesiastical history of Britain, that it was to us England was indebted for their naval and mural architecture.* Gildas, of Valentia, in his epistle on Britain, written A. D. 560, states, "that the Hibernians had large ships for the purposes of war; but that, in carrying on trade, they conveyed their commodities over a sea rough and tempestuous, in wicker boats, encompassed with a swelling covering of ox-hides." At the famous naval battle, fought in the bay of Dundalk, between the Irish and Danes, in the eleventh century, the particulars of which we will narrate in its proper place, the Irish fleet consisted of seventy large ships. Neither in the voluminous pages of Polybius, nor in the whole eloquent tomes of Gibbon, can a feat of such devoted heroism and magnanimous patriotism, be found, as will parallel the romantic exploit of the Irish Admiral, FINGALL, at the Dundalk sea-fight.

DR. WARNER, the liberal English historian, after giving a circumstantial account of this celebrated marine conflict, says:

"The contest was hot and bloody; the chief admiral of the Irish fleet, FAILBHE, fell, covered with blood, on the Danish ship which he had boarded, and the Danish General being convinced, that upon the loss of his own ship, would, in all probability, follow the loss of all his fleet, exerted all his skill and valour, in order to save it: and that he might strike terror and dismay into the Irish, he caused the head of Failbhe to be cut off, and exposed to view. FINGALL, the Irish Vice-Admiral, on seeing the horrid spectacle, resolved to revenge the death of his late commander, and calling to his men to follow him, they boarded the Dane with irresistible fury. The

* "On the arrival of the Romans, the inhabitants of Britain had few vessels, except the small craft employed in fishing and piratical expeditions, to the neighbouring countries. These vessels seldom exceeded twenty tons burden, were constructed of frame timber work, cased with wicker, and lined externally and internally, with hides of animals. The sails were of skins, and cordage of thongs. They were seldom employed in commerce, which then, and for a century after, was principally carried on in *Irish bottoms*.

The Romans, in some respects a naval power, increased the shipping, as far as related to trade and commerce, in respect to number, but restricted the size to about seventy-eight tons burden, and absolutely prohibited ships of war; for though they had powerful fleets in the British harbours, for the protection of the Island, they were either brought from Italy, or purchased from Venetian merchants; consequently, on these vessels being withdrawn, on the departure of the Romans, the Britons suffered as much in their maritime affairs, as in other respects, for their native vessels became an easy prey to the Frank and Saxon pirates at sea, and were not secure, even in their own harbours, which reduced the internal commerce to its lowest ebb, and quite annihilated the foreign trade.

The Anglo-Saxons, in order to oppose the Danes, were obliged to have recourse again to naval architecture, and king Alfred,* who had been exiled in Ireland, on regaining possession of his kingdom, invited over *Irish ship-builders*, who constructed for him a large fleet. Some of the vessels then built, had seventy-six oars, and were generally navigated by sixty or seventy sailors. In A. D. 957, king Edgar had a fleet of three hundred sail of small vessels."—*Vide Dandel's Inquiry into the rise and progress of the British Navy, London edit. 1799, Vol. I. page 97.*

"That the Irish had letters anciently, is nothing doubtful; for the Saxons of England are said to have had their letters and learning, and learned men from the Irish."—*Spencer's state of Ireland, 1548.*

* The Princes Alfred and Oswald, were educated in the College of Mayo, as Henry and Lingard, the English historians testify, by historical proofs that cannot be subverted by the sophistry of scepticism.—AUTHOR.

conflict became terrible and destructive ; but there being so many fresh men to supply the place of the slaughtered or disabled Danes, the Irish had no prospect of obtaining the victory. As unable, however, as Fingall was, to possess himself of the Danish ship, he was too valiant an Irishman to think of retreating to his own ; especially, without the destruction of SITRICK, the Danish Prince, in revenge of the death of the Irish commander. He took a resolution, therefore, in this dilemma, which is not to be equalled for determined bravery or romantic devotedness of gallant patriotism, in any history. Making his way up to Sitrack, with his sword against all that opposed him, he grasped him in his arms, and threw himself, with him, into the sea, and they both perished together."

Eochaídh, after his accession to the throne, did nothing, either in war or policy, worthy of historical note, until the twelfth year of his reign, when in attempting to subvert revolt, he died by the sword of Eochaídh VI. surnamed from his extraordinary swiftness in running, the Deer-hunter. This Prince was assisted in his insurrectionary war against the last monarch, by his brother, CONUNG-BEG-OIGE, (or the intrepid youth) and in consequence, they became joint monarchs of Ireland. Like some of their predecessors, they divided the kingdom between them ; but they were not suffered to enjoy the sweets of sovereignty long, without being disturbed by the storms of revolt, and the pretensions of rivals. The territories of Eochaídh were invaded by LUGHADH-LAIMH-DEARG, (or the Prince of the bloody hand) who, on coming to an engagement with the king, defeated his forces, and slew himself in the conflict. The conqueror then turned his arms against CONUNG, who, then unable to resist his victorious army, fled to Gaul for succours.

LUGHADH, in consequence was raised to the throne without further opposition. He was designated the Prince of the bloody hand, because that was the symbol emblazoned on his banner, and which is still the crest of his posterity, the O'NEILS. While he was felicitating himself with the prospect of a peaceable reign, his rival, CONUNG, returned from Gaul, at the head of a formidable auxiliary force, with which he succeeded in defeating and killing Lughaidh, in the seventh year of his administration. CONUNG, having derived wisdom in the school of adversity, formed the determination of governing his people with matured wisdom and patriotic justice. He revised the laws, abolished unnecessary taxation, and adopted every expedient of policy and prudence, to aggrandize the nation.

But neither his virtues nor his patriotism could avert the destroying arm of ambition. He fell in battle by the hand of his successor, ART II. of the Heberian dynasty, in the tenth year of his reign, lamented by the majority of the Irish nation, who were unable to prevent his fate. The translator of Keating gives the following stanzas, from an Irish bard, in praise of his heroic qualities :

" CONUNG the brave, with love of glory fired,
Oppressed by force, triumphantly expired ;—
He raised his courage for the last debate,
And with a princely soul, undaunted met his fate—
Slain by the sword of ART."

ART did not long retain the reins of power ; that which gave them into his hands, the sword, wrested the royal sceptre from his grasp, in the sixth year of his reign. The battle that terminated his life and sway, was fought at Tallanstown, in the county of Louth, A. M. 3432.*

FIACHA, the son of Muiredheach, the conqueror of the last monarch, succeeded to the throne which he possessed for a period of ten years, and then fell by the hand of his successor, OLIOLL, who enjoyed the sovereignty for the space of eleven years, when the sword of Airgeadmhar doomed him to death on the field of battle.

The oppression and cruelty exercised by AIRGEADMHAR, naturally produced discontent and disaffection ; so that the moment EOCHADH, the son of Olioll, unfurled the standard of revolt, it was the signal of a general and simultaneous insurrection. The tyrant, not prepared to resist the danger that pressed around him, fled to Albania, to claim assistance from his brother-in-law, the prince of that country.

In the mean while, EOCHADH VII. is exalted to the throne, amidst the enthusiastic acclamations of the Irish people, who hailed him as their deliverer from the despotic and intolerable yoke of Airgeadmhar. But ere seven years had revolved, the despot returned with a mercenary army of Albanians, with which he carried terror and dismay through Munster. In his devastating progress, he was joined by DUACH, the son of Fiachadh, of the family of Heremon, as well as LUGHADH, and many other malcontents ; so that his army became numerous and formidable. The monarch, with all the forces he could collect, quickly marched to Adair,† near Limerick, where he brought the invader to an engagement, A. M. 3460. Both chieftains entered the field of fate, with the resolution to either conquer or die. The Irish annalists say, that there never was, perhaps, a battle so gallantly and fiercely contested as this : it was heroic ambition struggling for power, with a chivalric and resolute valour, that could only be subdued by death. This murderous conflict, which was ruled by carnage and destruction, lasted from the getting up to the going down of the sun, when, at length, the brave monarch was prostrated among the slain, which gave a dear-bought victory to Airgeadmhar. His chance success in this battle, put the sceptre of tyrannic power once more into his hands, which, for sixteen years afterwards,

* TALLANSTOWN, is a pretty, rural village, situated on the shrubby banks of the beautiful river Lagan, in the midst of the domain of LORD LOUTH, on the road to LONDONDERRY, at the distance of forty-six miles N. E. from Dublin. Adjoining this rural village, there is an ancient Rath, or mound, which the late Lord Louth caused to be surrounded by a quick-set hedge, and planted by a variety of umbrageous trees and flowering shrubs, so that it is now one of the most picturesque ornaments in this highly embellished domain. About three miles from Tallanstown is LOUTH, the little village from which the county derives its name, and THOMAS PLUNKETT, Baron of Louth, his title. This village was once dignified by piety, and renowned for its seven churches and two abbeys, all of which, like the architectural glories of Babylon, are now wasting away by the consumption of time and desolation.

We will have occasion to speak more largely of Louth when we have brought down our history to the days of St. Patrick.

† We will give the topography of Adair in a future chapter.

he pressed upon the Irish, with the most galling weight of despotism. But despôtism always generates the cause of its own annihilation. The oppression of this tyrant reached that point which human forbearance could not possibly tolerate; and an insurrection, headed by his former friend, DUACH-LAGHRACH, deprived him of his power and life, in the twenty-third year of his inglorious and cruel reign, A. M. 3480.

DUACH-LAGHRACH, which signifies, violent and hasty, was crowned monarch by the Druids, at Tara. Our historians represent him as a prince of the most irritable temperament; and such was the unappeasable relentlessness of his passion for summary justice, that the moment a criminal was condemned, he was hurried to execution. But this choleric disposition extinguished all the tenderer charities of humanity in his cold breast, which was never, it appears, softened by that compassionate mercy, which is the most magnanimous virtue of the monarch. His quondam friend, LUGHAIDH-LAIGHE, or the fawn-hunter, of the dynasty of Heber, who so materially assisted him in gaining possession of the crown, became dissatisfied and discontented, at not being, according to compact made between him and Duach, when they conspired against Airgeadmhar, associated in the regal government, resolved to have vengeance for so ungrateful a breach of faith. He soon found himself at the head of a powerful military force, which enabled him to ascend the throne, after he had vanquished and killed his predecessor, A. M. 3490. Duach's reign of three years, except the events we have related, furnish no occurrence deserving of historical note.

Lughaidh-Laighe, after thus acquiring the darling object of his wishes, gave himself up to the alternate pleasures of love and the chase, until he had completed the seventh year of his regal sway; when his successor, AODH-RUADH, of the royal line of Ir, challenged him to the martial field, where he forfeited his life and crown A. M. 3497.

DR. KEATING presents us with a very romantic episode, relative to king Lughaidh, which the classic reader will at once trace to that fictitious loom, that wove the amours of Endymion and Diana—
POETIC INVENTION.

"This Prince," says the Doctor, "it seems, as he was hunting in one of his forests," was separated from his retinue, and, in his endeavour to rejoin his suite, he was met, in a gloomy labyrinth, by an old withered hag, who, after promising to conduct him to his friends, succeeded, by her lascivious blandishments, in seducing the monarch to her embraces, who, "nothing loath," no sooner threw one of his arms round her shrivelled neck, and began to caress her, than the sibyl was metamorphosed into a blooming maiden, of the most enchanting beauty."

This allegorical representation of the genius of Erin, was introduced, no doubt, by the adulatory court Laureate, of the Irish king, by such another fawning sycophant, as "the deep-mouthed SOUTHEY." When fiction creates a NUMA POMPILIUS, she can easily bless him with the celestial charms of an EGERIA. If Southey, the time-serving apostate—the unprincipled defamer of the illustrious Byron, had

lived in the days of Caligula, he would have lauded his horse as an accomplished senator, and ascribed to him "every virtue under heaven."

CHAPTER XIII.

The family coalition of the Princes of the House of Ir, to maintain the possession of the Irish Monarchy.—The reign of Aodh-Dithorba and Ciombaoith, and Queen Macha.—Building of the famous palace of Emania, in the county of Armagh.—The elevation of Reachta to the throne, and his wars with the Albanians.

A. M. 3497, AODH-RUADH, or the red, being a wise, shrewd, and political Prince, who, profiting by the melancholy fate that attended so many of his royal predecessors, for ages, came to the determination of making a compact with all his relatives of the Irian dynasty, that would insure the stability of the regal authority, in the hands of the members of that family. He therefore summoned the national estates to Tara, and in their presence, ratified a solemn treaty, with his principal relatives, which stipulated between the contracting parties, that himself, and each of his brothers, or each of their eldest sons, should reign in rotation to twenty-one years, and that they should cordially unite in defeating the pretensions of the houses of Heber and Heremon, to the monarchy. The national estates gave their sanction to the agreement, and this *act of settlement* was formally recorded in the great Book of the Laws.

Whether the other pretenders to the throne, were intimidated by this family alliance, or by the standing army, with which the king then garrisoned all the strong holds in the kingdom, we have no historical evidence, or data, to solve the question; but it appears that AODH enjoyed a tranquil reign of nineteen years, which was terminated by the fatal catastrophe of his being drowned, while passing a cataract at Belleck, in the county of Donegal, which to this day, in commemoration of the event, retains the appellation of "*Eas-ruadh*," or the red-fall.

In pursuance of the terms of family compact, his brother, DITHORBA, assumed the regal office, and after a prosperous reign of twenty years, undisturbed by civil or foreign wars, he died at Tara, of a malignant distemper, A. M. 3518. His nephew, CIOMBAOITH, the son of his brother, Fionntan, ascended the vacant throne, without dispute or molestation. Possessing talents of prime order, which were highly cultivated by education, he commenced his reign under the most brilliant auspices. His well-known prudence and elevation of mind, presaged the happiest results from his administration. He signalized the first acts of his regal authority, by enacting wise laws, and framing beneficial institutions for the promotion of national happiness and prosperity. After laying his plans of government before the national assembly, he married his cousin, the beautiful MACHA-RUADH, or the red-haired daughter of king AODH. Though

this celebrated Princess had red tresses, yet our historians represent her as the loveliest woman of her age. This monarch governed the kingdom with such justice and impartiality, that he was emphatically denominated, the second OLLAMH FODHLA.

After a beneficial reign of twenty years, rendered memorable by the blessings of peace enjoyed by his people, he died at Tara, A. M. 3559. As soon as the honours due to his obsequies were paid, the eldest son of Dithorba, on whom the right of succession to the crown devolved, in consequence of Aodh, the father of the Queen regent, leaving no male issue, claimed the throne as his just and indisputable inheritance. But Macha, animated by a spirit of courage, that has immortalized her name, boldly entered the house of the national convention, and before the representative majesty of the kingdom, eloquently asserted that, as the daughter of Aodh, and the widow of Ciombaoith, she was the legitimate successor to the throne; that she wished to adhere to the laws of the realm, and obtain the sanction of that august assembly, in her proceedings; but that, if justice was denied by them, in contravening her legal and unalienable rights, she must in that case, resort to the sword to enforce her claims. Druids, Brehons, and Senators, were confounded by the daring audacity of her harangue; but the constitutional law annulled her claims, and shut her out from the throne, for there was no instance or precedent, which could warrant the convention to suffer a woman to reign in Ireland. As soon as she was told that they must surrender the crown to the rightful heir, she laconically replied, "*He must then fight up to his knees in blood, before he can pluck the diadem of my fathers from my brow.*" After uttering this threat, she hastened to the camp, where a numerous and devoted army waited her orders.*

The sons of Dithorba, finding that the convention of the estates could not put them in possession of power, instantly proceeded to embody a military force, to expel the magnanimous heroine from the throne. As soon as the Queen learned that they were advancing on Tara, in hostile array, she marshalled her troops in the great square of the palace and addressed officers and soldiers, in the most moving and impassioned terms of eloquence. It is easy to judge, what effect the appeal of a beautiful Queen, had on the susceptible affections and combustible enthusiasm, of an Irish army, composed, as it was then, of courage and chivalry. Every heart was inflamed, and every tongue was loud in the exclamation—"Let your Majesty lead us to the enemy's camp!" In a moment this intrepid Amazon mounted her war horse, and at the head of her devoted soldiers, marched forward to meet the coming foe.

When she approached the eminence, in the county of Meath, where the insurgents were encamped, she immediately drew up her troops in order of battle, and, before she gave the signal of attack, she rode along the lines, and addressed the most animating speech to every corps of her army:—she reminded them of the valour of her ancestors, and the justice of her cause, "and though, gentlemen,"

* MR. MOORE, in his history, has not honoured the memory of *Macha*, the very Omphale of Ireland, with even an allusion.

added she, "you will combat to-day under the command of a woman, yet I shall prove that I am worthy of leading Irish heroes, and that, in the woman-heart of your Queen, there is glowing the chivalric spirit of my Milesian fathers."

Every column, inflamed with burning ardour, rushed to the charge: the onset was terrible and destructive; for the troops of Dithorba were brave and determined, so that they stood before the spears of the assailants, like a wall of brass: the Queen, with invincible courage, rushed to every point of danger, rallied and reanimated every retreating column, then placing herself at the head of the heavy archers,* and the household troops of Tara, she made an impetuous and irresistible assault on the strong position, defended by the sons of Dithorba in person, and the flower of their army, which she carried in a gallant style, and succeeded in capturing a great number of her opponents, and putting her rivals and their fugitive soldiers to a shameful flight;—leaving in the hands of their conquering heroine, their camp, equipage, and spoils. This most decisive victory, gained by Macha, struck her enemies with fear and dismay, while it augmented her adherents, who now revered her with a kind of idolatrous admiration. When she returned to Tara in triumph, several members of the national convention, who had opposed her pretensions to the throne, fled, and the Arch-Druid concealed himself in the sanctuary of the temple. But Macha, too magnanimous for revenge, displayed as much clemency in the cabinet, as she did valour in the combat, by publishing a decree of general amnesty, which had the effect of making former enemies her attached friends.

* ARCHERS.—The ancient Irish soldiers acquired great fame for their expertise and skill, in archery. No youth, however noble, would be admitted into the *Fiana Erion*, or Irish militia, who could not, with precision, pierce a given object with an arrow, at the distance of 200 yards. These cross-bowmen did great and destructive execution in battle. Perhaps the science of archery, can boast as high an antiquity in Ireland, as in any other nation on earth. In several renowned battles the Irish bowmen obtained the victory. When our FINGAL delivered Caledonia from the Roman yoke, his accomplished archers were the terror of the Roman legions. In 1314, at the famous battle of Bannockburn, two regiments of Irish archers, which O'Neil sent to the assistance of his brother-in-law, Robert Bruce, contributed so effectually to the success of the Scottish arms, that CHAUCER, afterwards in alluding to the defeat of his countrymen, celebrated the bravery of the Irish, in the following couplet:

"To Albion Scots we ne'er would yield—
The Irish Bowmen won the field."

SPENCER, in a letter to Lord Southampton, dated August, 1597, extols the Irish archers for their discipline and power. He says—"They certainly do great execution with their short bows and little quivers, and their short-bearded arrows are fearfully *Scythian*." HOLINSHED, in his chronicles, tells us that the famous outlaw, Robin Hood, fled to Ireland, in the reign of Richard I.; and that an Irishman, of the name of Lawler, excelled him in feats of archery. By an act of parliament passed at TRIM, in the reign of Edward IV. according to Harris, it was ordained, that "every loyal Irishman, in the pale, might have an Irish bow of his own length, and one fistmele, at least, between the necks, with twelve shafts, of the length of three quarters of the standard." DR. HANMER, in recording the trial of skill and prowess in archery, between Robin Hood and Patrick Lawler, in Dublin, A. D. 1195, states that "Robin shot an arrow eleven score and seven yards, the distance from Old Bridge to St. Michael's church; but Lawler, his competitor, sent his arrow three yards farther."

Dithorba, overwhelmed with affliction, and dejected by grief, occasioned by the late defeat, died at Dundalk, in Louth, where he and his five sons, with the shattered remnant of their forces had retreated. In his last moments, he earnestly conjured his sons to make another effort to obtain the crown, and rescue the nation from the disgrace of having its sceptre wielded by a woman. As soon as they had celebrated the funeral ceremonies of their father, the five princes, whose names were *Baoth*, *Buadhach*, *Bras*, *Ullach*, and *Borbchas*, proceeded to recruit their army.

When they had completed their levies, which now amounted to a formidable force, they marched to Granard,* in the county of Longford, where they encamped, and instantly despatched heralds to the Queen, requiring her either to surrender the crown, or try the fate of another battle. She told the herald, she regarded the requisition to relinquish the crown, with pity and scorn; but that she was ready and willing to meet her competitors in battle, and abide by the event. The Queen, in consequence, once more took the field, and attacked the sons of Dithorba, in their camp, at Granard, and after an obstinate contest, gained a decisive victory over them.

The vanquished chieftains, with the broken remains of their forces precipitately retreated to Ulster, whither the victorious Queen pursued them, and overtaking them, in the county of Armagh, brought them to an action, in which she annihilated their whole army, and made captives of themselves. This unexampled success, prostrated the hopes of all the Queen's enemies, and filled her friends with exultation.

When the captive Princes were brought before her, instead of upbraiding them for their conduct, or treating them with the insolence of a conqueror, she, with a superior greatness of soul, rather complimented them, on the bravery they had displayed, in their wars with her, and sympathized generously in their misfortunes. When it was announced to her, that a council of the Druids and Brehons, had passed sentence of death on these gallant, but unfortunate warriors, she indignantly revoked the sentence, observing, "that Princes of the Milesian dynasty, as well as her blood relations, should never die like criminals." The punishment she then imposed, was, that they should build a stately palace, almost equal in magnitude and grandeur of architecture, to that of Tara, for her, which should ever after be the court of the Princes of Ulster. She then took a gold bodkin from her handkerchief, and designed the plan of the famous palace of EMANIA,—a superb structure, which for ages subsequent

* GRANARD is a flourishing and well built town, environed by a very beautiful and romantic country, in the county of Longford, at the distance of 75 miles N. W. from Dublin.

Here there is a very noble *Rath*, or moat, from whose summit, a charming and diversified prospect of six counties can be commanded. The houses in Granard, are mostly built of brick, and the spacious streets are well paved. The barracks are a great addition to the fine appearance of the town. Granard gives the title of Earl, to the Forbes' family, who are of Scotch descent, and were ennobled by Charles I. Castle Forbes, the elegant residence of the Earl of Granard, is at Newtown Forbes, between Longford and Granard. On every side of the latter town, there are landscape attractions for the Painter and the Poet.

to this era, A. M. 3563, was occupied by the kings of Ulster. This magnificent edifice, which, for extent and beauty of architecture, was only inferior to Tara, received the name of Emania, from the incident of Queen Macha having sketched out its form with her bodkin. The Irish designation of that fabric, was, according to Dr. Keating, *Eamhuin Macha*;—for *Ea* is pin, and *Muin*, or *Muineal*, neck; which, when compounded, signifies literally, the pin of the neck. Of the immense pile of Emania, which stood near Armagh; or of the princely castle of the *Craob-Ruadh*, or Red Branch, not a vestige of its architectural splendour remains, by which the antiquary could trace out its site; for like “heaven-built Ilium,” time has scattered its mural fragments in the winds of oblivion, but fame has sculptured its colossal image from the indestructible adamant of HISTORY, and placed it in the temple of immortality. The kings of Ulster were generally styled, the “Monarchs of Emania.” OSSIAN frequently alludes (*not McPherson’s utopian bard*) to the “stately halls of Emania;” and in an apostrophe, he says, “hail to thy pillared grandeur, lovely Emania! the seat of green Ullin’s kings.” When we bring down our history to the period, when the *Collas* destroyed the royal palace of Emania, we shall say more of it.

Macha, having triumphed over all her enemies, and immortalized her name, by the glory of her exploits, was suddenly seized by a fit of apoplexy, at Tara, which terminated her life and reign, A. M. 3566. The exploits of this illustrious heroine have been celebrated by the loftiest effusions of Irish eloquence and epic poetry. Prior to her death, she, by the concurrence of the national estates, appointed her cousin, REACHTA, the grand-son of king Lughaidh, of the dynasty of Heber, her successor.

He distinguished himself eminently, in the Queen’s wars, and gave proofs of possessing those qualities, that dignify the royal station. He was a very ambitious Prince, and no sooner had he taken the reigns of power, than he fitted out a large armament, with which he invaded Scotland, and reduced the country to complete subjection; and afterwards assumed the title of “Monarch of Ireland and Albany.” He returned to Tara, enriched with spoils and trophies. After a glorious reign of twenty years, he was killed in battle by his successor, JUGHAINÉ.

Mr. Moore, who, as far as his history could effect his purpose, has thrown a shroud of oblivion over the reigns and actions of all the regal successors of *Ollamh Fodhla*, down to the accession of Ciombaoith. He apologizes for this blank in his history in the following passage. “A long series of kings, with scarcely a single event worthy of commemoration, fills up the interval between the reign of this monarch (*Ollamh Fodhla*) and the building of the palace of Emania by king Ciombaoith; an event, forming as we have seen, a prominent era in the Irish annals, and from which Tighernach dates the dawn of authentic history. This splendid palace of the Princes of Ulster, who were from thence forward called Kings of Emania, had in its neighbourhood the mansion appropriated to the celebrated knights of the red-branch, so triumphantly sung by the Bards, and commemorated by the seanachies.” We wonder, indeed,

on what historical authority, Mr. Moore has attributed the building of Emania to Ciombaoith, as he had no more to do with its erection than with that of the palace of Cashel.

CHAPTER XIV.

The reign of Jughaine the Great.—His conquests.—Partition of Ireland into twenty-five Military Districts for his sons.—His death and character.

JUGHAIN-MORE, or Hugony the Great, of the House of Heremon, having triumphed over his predecessor as related in the last chapter, was solemnly invested with regal authority, at Tara, A. M. 3587. He had a mind enlightened by genius, and elevated to the loftiest aspiration of military fame, by a daring and insatiable ambition. As soon as the rejoicings and festivities of his coronation had subsided, he passed over into Albania with a military force, chastised the Picts, who then had manifested disaffection to his government, and levied large contributions from the entire colony. The fame of his power and exploits, spread over the continent of Europe, so that all the sovereigns, of this epoch, were desirous of his alliance and friendship. He shortly afterwards, with a splendid retinue of knights and minstrels, visited the court of Gaul, where he married the fair *Cæsaria*, surnamed *Gradhmarachd* or the lovely, the daughter of the monarch of that country.

When he returned to his kingdom with his beautiful Queen, he summoned the national estates to a solemn convocation at Tara, to whom he announced his projects of conquest, and his plans of enriching the empire by the accession of foreign territory. The devoted senators hailed his propositions with acclamation, and immediately gave the devised measures of the ambitious monarch their sanction. Availing himself of their pliant subserviency, and the ready disposition they had manifested to approve of his designs, no matter how unconstitutional, he boldly exacted from them a most solemn oath, which they swore on the smoking oblation, on the sacred altar of the sun, by the throne of that great deity, "*by the moon, stars, and by Neptune—to bear true and undivided allegiance to him and his posterity, in exclusion of the other royal houses of Ireland.*" When this illegal and unwarrantable procedure on the part of the king*

* "This was a memorable revolution in the form of the executive government. The kings of Ireland derived no rights from genealogical succession, by primogeniture;—nor was it sufficient to be of the royal line, unless they made their way to the throne by what the world too frequently denominates great actions, without entering into the worthiness of the motives. The ancient government of Ireland was a mixed monarchy, wherein the kings were elected out of a certain royal family."—*Dissertation on the History of Ireland.*

"The government of Ireland was at first divided after the manner of the ancient Gauls, into several petty states, with a head king elected over each of them. This was a kind of government which they derived, probably, from the Patriarchs, and was extremely consistent with the essence and genius of true liberty. But

was duly confirmed by the acquiescence of the national assembly, Jughaine, previously appointing his wife Queen Regent of Ireland and Albany, embarked with a large fleet, and after a short passage, effected a landing in Sicily.

The inhabitants of this island, not being able to resist such a war-like invader, submitted to whatever terms the conqueror thought proper to dictate to them. After leaving a colony in the island of Sicily, he thence sailed to Carthage, in order to assist the Carthaginians, his allies, in their wars with the Romans.* Our annalists speak in glowing terms of eloquent enthusiasm, of the heroic bravery of the Irish monarch and his soldiers in several battles with the Romans, and assert that the Carthaginian chiefs, as a reward for the valour and services displayed by Hugony in their cause, ceded to him the islands of Sardinia, Majorca, and Minorca, and bestowed upon him the glorious appellation and title of "*Monarch of Ireland and Albany, and all the Western Isles of Europe.*" We cannot, however, adduce any cotemporary evidence, to prove that Hugony performed the brilliant exploits, which some of our historians so confidently attribute to him.

during the successive reigns of many Milesian kings, the chief in abilities, and martial skill of the royal family, was elected to govern, as absolute monarch, the whole nation, with the aid and concurrence of the provincial kings."—WARNER.

"There were two great requisites to entitle a prince to the throne of Ireland; the right of Milesian blood, and the right of popular election."—HARRIS.

"No matter what virtues or qualities an ambitious leader might possess, the want of the royal Milesian blood would exclude him from the throne."—*Vind. of Irish History.*

"There were two things to be considered—hereditary right, and popular election. By hereditary right, any male relation to the deceased monarch was qualified to administer the chief government of that principality, the founder of which any of his ancestors had been: but by election, one man was invested with that dignity for the period of his life. Nor could those, in whom the power of choosing was centered, elect an alien, but he should be either the uncle, brother, son, or some other relation of the last reigning king. This law being strictly attended to, the sovereign power was conferred on the senior person, as he was thought to be more worthy to fill this elevated station."—O'FLAHERTY'S OGYGIA.

* "We have already shown the connexions between the Irish and Carthaginians; and there is a passage in Plutarch's life of Timoleon, who was nearly a contemporary with the Irish monarch, which is worthy of attention.

"He tells us, that at the siege of Syracuse, the Greek mercenaries in the Carthaginian army, in times of truce, frequently met and conversed with their countrymen under Timoleon. That one of the Corinthians addressed his countrymen in the opposite army thus:—'Is it possible, O Grecians, that you should be so forward to reduce a city of this greatness, and endowed with so many great advantages, into a state of barbarism, and lend your aid to plant Carthaginians so much nearer to us, who are the worst and the bloodiest of men? whereas, you should rather wish that there were many more Sicilies to lie between them and Greece. Have you so little sense, as to suppose that they came hither with an army from the Pillars of Hercules, and the Atlantic sea, to hazard themselves for the establishment for Icetas?'

"From the whole, I think we may reasonably conclude, that the Carthaginians procured powerful assistance from Ireland, as well as from Spain and Gaul, at this period: nor do I think I should be censured of rashness, if I were to offer a conjecture, that the *Sacred Cohort*, mentioned by *Diodorus*, was a select body of Irish troops, whose fidelity and intrepidity could be always depended on. To strengthen this conjecture, as our legions in Gaul were called *Finne-Gall*, and in Albany *Finne-Albin*, (or the militia of Albin,) we may well suppose that the *Fiune-Tornharaig*, or African legions, so often met with in old MSS., means no other than the *Irish Militia* in that service."—O'HALLORAN.

We are not aware that any Roman writer, who has narrated the occurrences of the Punic wars, makes mention of an Irish legion among the auxiliaries of Carthage.

But even if the imputed exploits of Jughaine had been all performed, and that in honour of his victories, his statue stood in the Temple of Jupiter Ammon, and that his martial deeds were emblazoned on the records of Carthage,—still the devouring conflagration kindled by the second Scipio, would have reduced the marble and the vellum to ashes. The Pyramids of Egypt are but the oblivious sepulchre of that unknown fame, which, it was vainly expected, they would have consecrated to immortality. It was always the policy of the Romans to destroy the monuments and registers of every country, which they had subjected to their arms, lest the mementos of past glory might inspire present insurrection. Hence we may fairly conclude that when they destroyed Carthage, at this juncture, they did not depart from their uniform practice of annihilation, by saving her archives, and writings from the fiery and devouring element.

The discord kindled in Ireland by the rivalry and jealousy of the conquering monarch's twenty-five sons, obliged him to abandon foreign acquisitions, and return to his own kingdom, which he found convulsed by anarchy and dissension. But the presence of the King soon restored order and tranquillity. Abuses were rectified by salutary remedies, grievances were redressed, the causes of discontent removed; and thus concord and confidence resulted from the firm, but conciliatory measures which the King had put in active operation.

The better to secure the internal peace of the kingdom, and obedience to the established laws, this monarch, by the advice of a council of Druids and Brehons, parcelled out the nation into twenty-five Vice-royalties, over each of which he appointed one of his sons, to whom he delegated magisterial power, to be exercised at his discretion.* By this measure of precaution, the King extended the sphere

* "Oral jurisprudence prevailed in Ireland in the most remote ages. The distribution of legal justice was for ages engrossed by the Druids and Brehons, who often made laws that were subversive of the rights and immunities of the Irish people, until, after ages of oppression, the great *Ollamh-Fodhla*, penetrating the tyranny which corrupted the stream of justice, gave the Irish a constitutional shield to defend their lives and properties from the aggression of Druidical tribunals. But the most glorious reformatations in the legislative code of Ireland, were effected by *Royney Rosgadhach*, the son of Hugony the Great, about 290 years before the Christian epoch."—BISHOP NICHOLSON.

"Before the introduction of written laws among the Irish, when any controversy was to be decided, the Brehon, or vice Druid, used to sit on an immense pile of stones, raised on a high eminence, without canopy or covering, and without clerks, registers, or records, or indeed without any formality of a court of justice; and this afterwards came to be called the Brehon tribunal; and strange as it may appear, the decisions of these rural courts were observed with inviolable sacredness."—WARNER.

"At this era, the revolutions in government were frequent, and the Druidical Brehons applauded every new change with seditious violence; and, in their judicial capacity, as Brehons, silenced or oppressed, but too often, the voice of justice. They sought every means of imposing on the public, and of rendering their knowledge as dark and cabalistic, as their decisions were violent and arbitrary."—O'CONNOR.

of monarchical influence, established a safeguard against the plots of disaffection, and held in check the intrigues of the provincial kings. Each of the twenty-five Princes, on setting out for the district allotted to him for government, was accompanied by a learned and sage Brehon, whom he constituted his prime-minister and supreme judge. But soon after these princes had been thus invested with authority, they began to play the parts of rapacious despots, in their respective districts. Their amercement and rapacity set every principle of justice and equity at defiance. They quartered their soldiers on the inhabitants, and not content with imposing this oppressive burden, they also exacted from them contributions of money and oxen. The galling inflictions of their grievous dominion became so insupportable, that the people were, at length, emboldened to represent the aggressions of the petty despots to the monarch, who promptly attended to the appeal of his subjects, and had immediate recourse to the most effectual means of suppressing the evils that pressed so heavily on their liberties and fortunes. Such of his sons as were notorious for their despotism, he removed from their stations; and such as he found only partially guilty of the imputed delinquency, he reprimanded in severe terms of admonition, and then, on their making a solemn promise of amendment, suffered them to resume their lieutenancy. Having thus redressed the grievances and remedied the wrongs of which his people complained, the wise monarch proceeded to make a tour through his kingdom. Beneficence and improvement marked the footsteps of his progress on this occasion. He every where relieved the wants of indigence—opened a sphere for industry and employment, by ordering the erection of bridges, raths, and fortifications at all places that afforded sites for them.

This laudable conduct of the sovereign, not only set the spirit and genius of the nation into action, but contributed to concentrate around his throne the hearts and affections of his subjects. The good and glorious monarch continued for a series of years to witness, with delight, the growing greatness and happiness of a people, whom he loved as a parent, and by whom he was beloved with the filial feelings of children.

But, notwithstanding the virtues that adorned his reign, and the hold which his amiable character possessed in popular opinion, ambition resolved to use that means which had placed the crown upon his head in depriving him of it—the sword. The feuds and bloody discord that unhappily raged, with unnatural animosity, among the sons of Jughaine, and to which they had all fallen victims except two, encouraged his own brother, BADHBHCHADH, to raise the standard of revolt. The event ended in the death of the monarch, in an engagement which ensued, in the fortieth year of his reign, and the seventieth of his age.

But scarce had the conqueror received the druidical benediction, after his coronation, when the two sons of Jughaine, Laoghairc-Lore and Cobhthaigh-Caolmberg, effected a counter-revolution, and deprived the uncle of life and throne, in the second day of his reign.

The historic relations which have come down to us of the alleged conquests and chivalric gallantry of Jughaine-More, are no doubt

impregnated with the spirit of fiction, and embellished with the glowing colours of poetry; yet, while we would strip the warrior's fame of the fabulous plumage, with which bardic enthusiasm has so lavishly decked it, we must still admire the patriotic King and just Legislator, and accord to him that eulogium, which the highest deserts of regal station, justice, philanthropy, and mercy, emphatically invoke from us as an impartial historian of Ireland.

CHAPTER XV.

*The accession of Laoghaire II.—Is murdered by his brother, who ascends the throne.—
The murder of his nephew, and his horrid conduct towards his grand-nephew.*

The genius and bravery which LAOGHAIRE so conspicuously evinced in deposing and despatching the regicide, enlisted the good opinion and partiality of the nation in his favour, to such an extent of enthusiasm, that the general voice called him to the throne to the exclusion of his eldest brother. The Druids and Brehons finding it unavailing to stem the irresistible tide of popular prejudice, like the Roman Pontiff, in the case of NAPOLEON, had to make a virtue of necessity, and freely give all the solemn pomp of religion to the inauguration of the prince of the people. His elevation implanted in the bosom of his brother, the most rancorous feelings of envy and jealousy; but he endeavoured for the present to smother the latent fires of malice that wasted his personal and mental energies. On every occasion, he endeavoured to sustain the character of an affectionate brother, in the hope that kind destiny might yet afford him an opportunity of appeasing the angry passions which, in his heart, turned the "milk of human kindness" into the poison of revenge. "But this concealed spirit," says O'Halloran, "sensibly affected his constitution, which increased on hearing of the birth of a grand-nephew; and he became at length so emaciated, as to take to his bed."

The noble-minded King, on hearing of the indisposition of an only brother, whom he sincerely loved, was sensibly touched with affliction, and lost not a moment in paying an affectionate visit of condolence, in which, to make it more respectful and imposing, he was accompanied by his guards and nobles, to his dear Cobhthaigh. When the monarch entered the chamber of his brother, and beheld the ravages which indisposition had made in his face and frame, the tears of fraternal anguish flowed involuntarily through his eyes, from the fountain of a sincere heart. The artful Cobhthaigh, pretending to be moved by the generous concern of the King, said—"Brother this tender affection wins my heart, and makes me regret that my approaching death will deprive me of an opportunity of testifying the attachment which animates me towards your Majesty; but still, as this may be the last meeting we shall ever have in this world, I am sorry, dear brother, that courtiers should hear the affec-

ting and mournful words of an eternal farewell, or witness the last sad embrace of brothers."

"Dearest Cobhthaigh!" said the confiding monarch, "believe me that my motive in bringing my royal train, sprang from my desire of imparting pomp and eclat to my visit to a brother who shares equally with my Queen and son, the warmest love of my heart; but console yourself with this assurance until tomorrow, when I shall again come to see you, alone and unattended."

Accordingly, on the following day, the unsuspecting King repaired early to the chamber of his brother, and seating himself on his bedside, he began with the most tender solicitude, to inquire how he had rested the preceding night; but receiving no answer, he was in the act of bending his body over his brother, to ascertain whether he slept, when the villanous Cobhthaigh, suddenly rising, plunged a poignard into the breast of the monarch, who had only time, before he expired to ejaculate—"I am murdered!—but Bel shall punish you for the treacherous deed!"

The cruel fratricide, with his infamous accomplice, the Arch-Druid, having previously won over the interest of the army, found no difficulty in silencing the murmurs of the people. The assassin was crowned on the stone of destiny, at Tara, by the hands of his iniquitous minion, A. M. 3619. But the flagitious fratricide had still to wade deeper in kindred blood, before his guilty mind could reach the resting-place of imagined security.

His nephew, Olioll, and his infant son, *Maon*, (or Mahon) were still living; and he thought that while they had existence, his throne tottered on a slippery foundation, and that he only held the sceptre by a supple and tremulous grasp. To remove this cause of terror and apprehension, he and his diabolical minister, the Druid, hired villains who inveigled him to the top of the mountain of *Magh-Breag-Didhiod*, (now the Dargle*) in the county of Wicklow, whence

* POWERSCOURT, the princely residence of Viscount Powerscourt, is situated in the county of Wicklow, at the distance of twelve miles from Dublin, and presents to the admiration of the traveller a charming combination of picturesque and romantic scenery. Powerscourt, and all its manors, formed part of the immense possessions of the O'Moore, of Leix. The *Virgin* Queen made a grant of Powerscourt, and its dependencies, to Sir Richard Wingfield, the ancestor of the present noble proprietor, who was marshal of Ireland at the accession of James I. Powerscourt House is an elegant specimen of Ionic architecture; and, like the Bank of Ireland, the Lying-in-Hospital, and the Dublin Society House, stands as a lasting monument of the Palladian taste of Mr. CASSELL, the famous architect. This edifice stands on the acclivity of a mountain, which elevates its oak-plumed crest far above the embattled turrets of the castle. The pilastered front, of chiselled stone, embellished with window-frame mouldings, sculptured architraves, and entablature decorations, at once pleases the eye, and fills the mind with admiration. The garniture of groves, and the grassy glades that spread flower-embroidered carpets beneath the waving shade of vivid foliage, overhanging a winding river, finely contrast architectural pomp with floral beauty. The Egyptian banquetting-hall, in this house, is as spacious as it is unique and magnificent. Its superb furniture, its figured draperies of damasked crimson, its living pictures, its breathing statues, its Grecian carpets, and Mosaic ceiling, as well as the reflective flood of coloured light that its mirror-constellated walls pour over its imposing *tout ensemble*, all tend to impart the radiant air and illusive enchantment of eastern splendour to the scene, and make the delighted beholder imagine, that he stood in the gorgeous pavilion which Cleopatra had fitted up for the reception of Cæsar. At each end

they precipitated him in the yawning chasm below, where he was drowned.

The infant Prince, Mahon, was now the only obstacle in the bloody road of atrocious ambition. His horrible treatment to this Prince was marked with such a refinement of cruelty, that we shall detail it in the language of the venerable Keating :

“ When the sanguinary tyrant sent for the child, he forced him to eat part of the hearts of his father and grand-father ; and to torture him the more, he caused him to swallow a living mouse, and by such inhuman methods, resolved to destroy him ; but, by a strange providence, the child was so affrighted by these barbarities, that he seemed deranged ;—and by the convulsions and agonies he was in, perfectly lost the use of his speech—which, when the usurper perceived, he dismissed him with his life, for he thought he would never recover his senses, and therefore could not be able to assert his right to the crown, or give him disturbance in the government.”

The ruthless usurper came to this conclusion by the advice of the wicked Arch-Druid, who exercised with impunity the most domineering ascendancy over the weak but vicious mind of the tyrant.

But the sequel of the next chapter will furnish another exemplification of the omnipotence and omnipresence of that watching providence, which never fails sooner or later, to smite guilt with the bolts of retributive vengeance, and to light for justice a torch, by which she can discover the perpetrators of murder in the darkest recesses of concealment.

The friends of young Mahon secretly conveyed him to the court of *Scoriat*, King of Munster, where he found a safe and friendly asylum, and where the sympathy and kindness of that monarch bestowed their assiduous solicitude in contributing to his happiness and comfort, and in perfecting his mind in all those solid and graceful accomplishments of education, which alone give lustre and eminence to the character of a Prince.

there is a gallery supported by Corinthian columns, and beautified by a gilt balustrade. The immense park intervening the house, and the water-fall, is as it were divided by rows of stately oaks, into rural aisles and choirs. You enter it through a portal, formed by a mountain chasm, opened by some concussion of nature, and arched by the knitted branches of trees.

On every side of the vale, through which a meandering river winds its devious course over a rocky channel, mountain cliffs, clothed in forest vesture, elevate their summits to the skies ; and, as you advance, the scene that opens to your view is terminated by a huge amphitheatre of wood, from the impending eminence of which, at the height of many hundred feet, the limpid cascade of the Dargle rushes stupendously out, like a torrent of molten crystal, dashing its impetuous waves over rocks and precipices of emerald, and then tumbling down headlong into the abyss below. The traveller who ascends the towering peak called the *Lover's Leap*, shall be repaid for his trouble by the picturesque prospect he will enjoy. The expansive sheets of undulating wood outstretched before him, the rocky spires capped with sky-mists, the distant limits of the domains of Tinnahinch, Miltown, and Charleville defining the outlines, while the round-towers of Glendalough, the castle of Rathdrum, and the gray cliffs of the Scalp, fill up the body of the landscape picture with the vivid tints of animation and form. To look down from the elevation, on the turbulent chasm at the foot of the rock, is truly fearful ; so that the romantic maiden, who, in the madness of disappointed love, precipitated herself into its yawning depths, has as great a claim on immortality as Sappho.

CHAPTER XVI.

Prince Mahon repairs to the court of his Uncle, the King of France—Distinguishes himself in the French army, of which he is appointed Generalissimo.—Moriatic, Princess of Munster, sends a harper as an emissary of love, to the Prince, who sings an ode of the Princess's composition, which awakens a tender passion for her in his bosom.—He invades Ireland and succeeds in recovering the throne of his ancestors—Marries the fair Moriatic, and is slain in battle by his successor, A. M. 3668, after a reign of nineteen years.—The accession of Meilge, Modh-Chorb, and Aongus to the throne.

The usurper dreading nothing from a Prince, like young Mahon, whom he considered deranged and dumb, scarcely ever bestowed a thought upon his existence, or the danger that might arise from his claims to the crown; but the secret and attached friends of the legitimate Prince, convinced of his genius and capacity, resolved to prevail upon him to go to his uncle's court, in France, where he might remain in safety, not only until his education was completed, but also until measures were sufficiently matured, and a phalanx of events set in motion for his restoration.

Prior to his departure, he and the Princess Moriatic, reciprocally pledged vows of eternal constancy to each other, and the feelings of their hearts acted in concert in affixing the seal of love to the solemn covenant. On the arrival of Mahon in France, he and his retinue were received with all the honours due to the heir apparent of the Irish throne, and all the distinctive *eclat* that could give pomp to the visit of a member of the royal family to the French Court. The external graces of his person, and the attraction of his mental accomplishments, soon won for him popularity and esteem among the French courtiers. At a court of Tournament, in which all the bravest knights of France contended, he won the prize of chivalry—and as the fair always admire the brave, his cousin, the beauteous Princess *Chalonsia*, conceived, on witnessing his feats, an ardent affection for him. Whether she ever made known the secret wish of her heart to Mahon, our historians do not tell us; but certain it is, that one of his suit found means of acquainting Moriatic of the tender passion with which her plighted lover had inspired the French Princess. Shortly after the victory at the court of tournament, Prince Mahon was raised, by his uncle, to the supreme command of the French army, where his valour and genius attracted the rays of popular fame. The renown of his exploits in arms, swelled not only the echoing voice of eulogium in France, but also in his native land, where its reverberation materially contributed to add fuel to the hopes of his adherents, while it sensibly touched, with an increasing glow of enthusiasm, that gentle heart in which his vow was recorded, and his image enshrined. While the sounds of the encomiastic tongue, which uttered the praises of her beloved Mahon, fell upon her ear like the music of the harp, still her jealousy of the seductive blandishments of the French Princess, often turned in imagination; the sweet melody into the dismal notes of the death-knell of love. Her bosom becoming a prey to the torture of suspense and fears, she came to the determination

of sending Craftine, a minstrel of her father's court, of whose fidelity she had experience, with a letter and a rich gift of jewels to Mahon.*

After instructing him in the management of his embassy, she handed him an ode of her own composition, breathing at once the inspired language of love and patriotism, which she caused him to set to plaintive music, and sing to his harp. No sooner had the minstrel convinced the princess, by several rehearsals, (if so we may term his trials,) of his power to give a touching and affecting expression to her feeling-speaking ode, than he set out for France.

When this bardic Mercury arrived at the head quarters of Mahon, on the banks of the Loire, he took his station unperceived, under the window of his pavilion, and sung to his harp the ode of the Irish princess. This ode, in the original language, possesses a spirit of poetry, and a soul-thrilling force of pathos, which even the genius of a MOORE could not transfuse into English verse. As it never has been, we believe, translated into English, the following tame, but literal version of it, may not only be pleasing to our readers, but induce the Irish Anacreon (MOORE) to consecrate and embalm it in that inspiration, which has conferred immortality on the "IRISH MELODIES."

"Warrior Prince, son of a thousand kings of wave-wreathed Erin, hast thou forgotten thine own native land, and the imperishable glory of thy sceptered sires ;—those Milesian heroes who were towers of fire in the battles of the valiant ? Is the voice of Erin's harp still dear to recollection, and gladdening to the soul of Prince Mahon, the hope of Innisfail ? Listen, O ! Prince, to strains that would speak the sorrows of thy oppressed country, and the wailings of desponding love. Know then, that Erin, thy country and kingdom, invokes thee, her darling son, to return to the throne of thy fathers, and rescue her from the fangs of usurpation.

"Return ! return to green Aelga ! and free thy people who writhe in the yoke of despotism. The harps of Tara breathe but the moaning sounds of wo ! the oaks of thy forests sigh dismally in the breeze ; the echoing rocks of Meath respond but to the lamentation of the *Banshee*, and the angry ghosts of thy royal fathers, as they stalk

* "The passion of love is not only very fruitful of invention, but also exercises talents, if it does not give them, which would never have been thought of without it ; and especially the talent of versification. Thus, whether this young Princess ever invoked the Muses before or not, she now composed a poem in praise of the heroic actions of Mahon ; and having procured a celebrated musician, to set and sing it to the harp, she prevailed on him to go to France and carry a letter from her to her lover. The contents of the letter are to be guessed at ; but no sooner had the bearer got access, delivered his credentials, and sung the poetry which accompanied them to the harp, than Mahon was inspired with a resolution of prosecuting his just claim to the throne of Ireland."—WARNER.

"The amatory and patriotic ode of the Princess Moriat, which is preserved in Molloy's illustrations of Irish history, is a composition fraught with beauty of language and melody of measure. I think it must have escaped the observation of our great Bard, or he would have given it in one of his deathless melodies."—McDERMOTT.

"Though the account of the love of Moriat and Mahon wear, seemingly, the air of romance, yet there is no fact in Irish history whose truth is better authenticated."—LYNCH.

over their pathway of clouds, call upon thee to rouse from thy inglorious apathy, and like them, make victory the footstool of thy throne. But if thy country cannot awaken pity in thy breast, surely love will melt thy sensibility to compassion, as the vernal sunbeams dissolve the crystal mirror of the ice-plated Shannon, when hoary winter becomes shocked at the reflection of his own austere features.

“Dost thou still remember Moriat, the maid of thy first love? Has absence obliterated the record of thy solemn vow—has another fairer, younger Princess, despoiled the heart shrine in which thy young affection placed her image, in that unforgetten, blissful, beatified moment, when in sweet whispered words of inspired eloquence, thou passionately assured her that ‘thy beloved Moriat should be the only divinity that thy feelings and affections would worship?’ This fondly remembered declaration is the very life of her hope—the bright beacon that shines in the wilderness of her heart. Return, O! wandering warrior, to the maiden of thy vow, who pines in her lonely bower, as the waves of anguish roll their foam over her soul, while she thinks on thee! Thy presence would brighten the darkness of her wo, with the rosy light of joy. O! Mahon, canst thou resist the double claim of country and of love, while their united voices thus implore thee to fly from a foreign clime, and bring back comfort, happiness and liberty to thy own dear native isle! Come, gallant Prince, of the race of heroes, to the halls of thy kingly sires, and at the head of the warriors of Erin, let thy valour and genius irradiate the conflict of fame; let your might be like the spirit of the tempest, uprooting the pines of the hill, and your vengeance as destructive as the mountain torrent, rushing in its irresistible rage over the pastoral valley of the husbandman!

“Though Moriat loves thee to the ardour of enthusiasm, and though thy death in the strife of spears would blast the verdure of joy, and hope, and leave her miserable, sad and inconsolable, like a lightning-shivered tree on the stormy hill of life, divested of flowers, fruit and foliage, still she would rather be thus bereaved than that her lover should be reproached with the shame of the little soul, or with a want of the courage and bravery which are the inherent characteristics of a Milesian hero. Hasten, then, oh! hasten! to the green fields which are the scenes of the glorious exploits of thy fathers:—here every object will proclaim their gallantry—here their spirits will inspire thee with invincible courage, and nerve with supernatural force the martial arm that shall prostrate the sanguinary usurper of thy throne.”

These strains fired the patriotism and passion of the prince, and awoke in his bosom the tenderest sympathies of love, and the warmest spirit of virtuous ambition. He now decided on making a bold effort to pluck his crown from the usurper’s brow. To the harper he confided a letter for his Moriat, assuring her of his unalterable affection, as well as another containing secret instructions to his adherents, to devise every means and expedient in their power, in order to facilitate the accomplishment of his designs. As soon as he despatched the minstrel, he resigned his command in the French army, and waited upon his uncle, who concurred in his project, and

promptly assisted him with soldiers and other means of carrying it into effect. He, with a strong military force embarked, and after a short voyage landed in Wexford, where he was proclaimed supreme monarch of Ireland.

The news of his landing communicated "glad tidings" to the Irish people, who were sorely afflicted by the tyranny of the usurper, and ardently longing for an opportunity of rending the cankering chain which fettered their liberties; so that, ere the lapse of a week, the Prince's ranks were thronged with the majority of the Irish population. The appearance and formidable attitude of Mahon, of whose existence Cobhthaigh did not before even dream, struck him with panic and dismay. He lost no time in organizing a force to resist the invader, but ere he had time to sally forth from his palace of Garman* near the Barrow, in the county of Wexford, the daring and intrepid Mahon was thundering at his gates. Mahon summoned him to surrender; but the usurper determined on a desperate defence, answered the requisition in the haughty and derisive language of defiance. This insolence provoked the indignation of Mahon, and set fire to his irritable spirit. He immediately gave orders for an assault, and leading on in person, a chosen body of his guards, he scaled the walls, and penetrating with irresistible valour into the interior of the palace, put the monarch and all his court to the sword. So unexpected was the attack of Mahon on the palace, that Cobhthaigh, with numerous guests, among whom, according to the *Leabhar-Lecan*, or Book of Leinster, were thirty Princes, were seated at the banquet table, when the assault commenced.

This signal exploit put him in possession of the throne, which he ascended with the general and unanimous consent of the nation.

As soon as he was inaugurated, on the stone of destiny, at Tara, he repaired to the court of his benefactor and friend, the king of Munster, and married the lovely Moriat.

He made extensive conquests in Britain, and after garrisoning some fortresses there, he marched into Albania, (Scotland) where he exacted tribute and compelled the Pictish king to do him homage as his vassal. Dr. O'Halloran and Keating assert in their histories, that Maon-Labhra became king of Gaul, on the demise of his uncle, but as the French annals take no notice of such an accession, we think that monarch never swayed the sceptre of Gaul. If he was elevated to the throne of that country, as alleged, contemporaneous history would notice so important an event. The inquisitive reader is, however, referred to Dr. O'Halloran's very ingenious arguments in support of the position that he has assumed on this subject. (*Vide History, page 165, vol. I.*) "The reason," says O'Halloran, "that Mahon is better known by our annalists, by the name *Labhra*, than his original one, *Maon*, is this: as soon as he had surprised and cut off his predecessor, a Druid, who was witness of the action, and in

* "In Garman, near Loch-Garman, in the vicinity of Inver-Slaine (now Wexford) was the chief residence of the provincial kings of Leinster; a place greatly celebrated by the old bards, as the frequent conventions of the states of Leinster were held there. It was in this district that *Maon*, or Mahon-Labhra established his Gaulish colony, after he had recovered his crown."—O'CONNOR.

his interest, cried out hastily, "Does he speak?" (the opinion of his being dumb having a general prevalence,) on which account he went ever by the name of *Labhra*, which signifies speech, to which the epithet *Luinseach*, or the navy, was added, in consequence of his having caused several ships to be built in the port of Wexford.*

We shall not introduce at length into our history, a fabulous tale,

* To give a comprehensive description of a town like WEXFORD, which has been the scene of so many historical events, from the days of Heremon down to the disastrous epoch of 1798, would require more space and time than we can now devote to its topography. We must, however, in accordance with our plan of illustration, furnish our readers with a local and historical sketch of a place that is so famed in our annals.

The flourishing town of Wexford is situated near the sea, upon the pastoral banks of the river Slaney, at the distance of ninety-four English miles from Dublin. The ancient name of Wexford was *Inber-Slaine*, or the Port of the Slaine. Ptolemy, in his Geography, denominates Wexford, *Garmana*, "from the colony of Gauls or Germans," says Dr. O'Sullivan, "which *Maon* established there about two hundred and seventy years before Christ." It once could boast of its druidical temples, feudal castles, and Christian fanes, but the ravages of time and war have thrown down the domes and pediments of Wexford. The vesper-bell is not heard in the ruined abbey—the white hands of beauty no longer touch the chords of the harp in the halls of the hero—the revels of chivalry no longer break the stillness and silence that reign in the desolate pavilions of Dermot, king of Leinster. The ruins of Wexford might warrant a Volney to call this town "a city of sepulchres." The inhabitants of Wexford are spirited, affluent, and tasteful, if we were to judge from the architecture of their public edifices; but still, when we contemplate the magnificent relics of castles, abbeys, and fortifications, that strew their mouldering porticoes, battlements, and arches, in every direction, the hope of even seeing Wexford rise in its pristine pillared grandeur, cannot for a moment be entertained. The church, Catholic chapel, court and custom houses, and barracks, are creditable architectival ornaments; but the narrowness of the streets cast a sombre shade over the appearance of the town, and has the effect of giving new buildings the gloomy antique aspect of those houses in which Strongbow and his soldiers resided, in 1172. Several portions of the strong wall that encircled the town in the days of Cromwell, are still standing. The harbour is spacious, but the entrance is dangerous, as the sands of two large moles, between which the channel runs, are moved and shifted by every tide. It was here Strongbow's forces first landed, under Robert Fitzstephens, A. D. 1169. The town was then garrisoned by the Danes, who did not acknowledge the sovereignty of Dermot McMurrough, the king of Leinster, so that they refused to open their gates to the invaders, whose whole army did not exceed three hundred and eighty men. Immediately after this refusal, Fitzstephens despatched a messenger to Ferns, then the palace of Dermot, requiring aid from him as king of Leinster, to reduce the town, which was speedily sent. The inhabitants overawed by the superior force of the allies, surrendered, and Dermot made a present of the duties and customs of Wexford to Fitzstephens. In 1170, the English garrison was increased by another body of soldiers, under the command of Maurice Fitzgerald, the brother-in-law of Fitzstephens. On the 23d of August, 1170, Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, at the head of 1100 men, joined Fitzstephens here. As soon as Dermot had intelligence of Strongbow's arrival, he hastened to Wexford to pay his court to the invader, and concert the plan of operation against King Roderick O'Connor. Dermot was accompanied on this visit by his beautiful daughter, Eva, whose charms made a captive of the invader's heart, and on the second day after her arrival in Wexford, she was espoused by him. The nuptials were celebrated with great pomp and eclat.

Strongbow, on the death of his father-in-law, (Dermot) assumed the regal government of the Province of Leinster, as the heir of the deceased king. Fitzstephens oppressed the inhabitants of Wexford so intolerably, that they only waited for an opportunity of expelling by force the English garrison. The occasion they so impatiently desired, to avenge their wrongs, in a short time presented itself to their wishes. The Governor having marched out with the greater part of the garrison, to stop the incursion of O'Moore, the Prince of Leix, the hour of retribution was quickly seized upon by the persecuted inhabitants, who rising, *en masse*,

relative to this monarch, which is gravely related by Dr. Keating and Warner, setting forth, that like Midas, king of Phrygia, he had asses' ears, and that in order to conceal the deformity, he caused all the hair-cutters who had shorn his locks to be put to death, lest the secret might be divulged to his subjects. One man, however, the only son of a poor widow, escaped the doom of his predecessors, by swearing that he should never reveal to a human being, what he had witnessed when cutting the king's hair. But a secret is so heavy a burden, that few virtues can sustain it. The hair-dresser's mind, languishing under this load, became impatient to throw off so irksome a pressure. Without divulging the facts, he informed a learned Druid, that he possessed a secret which he had solemnly sworn never to discover to a mortal being. The Druidical casuist told him, that in order to avoid death, and the infamy of perjury, he must go to a neighbouring grove of willows, and whisper to the first tree which should arrest his eye, the secret. The hair-cutter well pleased with this advice, religiously followed its dictates. Sometime after, one of the king's Harpers got the devoted tree to which the secret was confessed, cut down, and had a harp made out of it. As soon as it was strung and finished, the minstrel, on touching its chords, was astonished at the expression of the audible sounds "*Da chuas capoll air Labhradh Luings each*," or in English, Labradh the king, has on his head the two ears of a horse. The monarch soon heard of the wonderful instrument, and caused it to be brought to him, and when he struck its strings, the sounds breathed the offensive expression. Mahon's conscience was struck with remorse by this miracle, wrought as he supposed by the hand of heaven, to punish him for his cruelty, so that in order to expiate his crimes, and propitiate the anger of the sun, he ever after openly exposed the deformity of his long ears. This poetic fiction was introduced, no doubt, into our history,

put such of the soldiers in the garrison as offered resistance, to the sword. They then sallied out of the town, and waited in ambush the return of Fitzstephens, on whom they fell with fury, and succeeded in taking him and his principal officers prisoners. On Strongbow's hearing of the misfortune that befel his friend, he instantly marched towards Wexford with a strong force, with which he intended to punish the Wexfordians for their revolt, and rescue the governor from captivity. But as soon as the townsmen were apprised of the Earl's approach they set the town on fire, and fled for safety with their prisoners and effects, to Lady Island, in Forth. The magnificent abbey of the Blessed Virgin, which the famous poet, Saint Fiech, Bishop of Ferns, erected in the fifth century, was destroyed in this memorable conflagration.

As soon as the Wexfordians heard of Henry's arrival in Waterford, they abandoned the isle of their retreat, and proceeded with their prisoners to the presence of the English king, in order to claim his protection, and prefer their complaints against Fitzstephens, for his despotic conduct. Henry received them graciously, and not only severely reprimanded the ex-governor, but committed him to prison in Waterford. He then, to encourage the Wexfordians to rebuild their town, gave them a charter of immunities, which is in force to this day. The town quickly rose like like a Phoenix, out of the ashes. Sir John Devereux erected a superb abbey, in all the grandeur of Gothic architecture, on the ruins of St. Fiech's superstructure. The Talbots and the Fitzgeralds also built churches and religious houses here. In the reign of Edward IV. James, Earl of Desmond, then Lord Deputy of Ireland, convened a Parliament in this town.

To narrate the occurrences in Wexford during the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. shall be the proper business of our history of those periods.

“to point a moral,” and render more disgusting the visage of wickedness.

Mahon's wise administration proved a blessing to Ireland; he was beloved by his subjects, and respected by the neighbouring nations. His passion for military parade and pomp, induced him to keep a large standing army in pay, but the justice of his government never permitted military despotism to trench on the liberties of the Irish nation. He caused his soldiers to arm themselves with the *Laighean* or Gaulish spear, a circumstance from which Leinster derives its present name, as the spears were fabricated in Wexford, then the capital of *Galenian*, and in consequence, the ancient *Galian*, or district of the Belgians, was called *Coige Laighean*, which is the province of spears. This monarch, notwithstanding his popularity, and the excellence and mildness of his government, was killed in battle by his successor, *Meilge*, or Molbhthack, in the nineteenth year of his reign, A. M. 3668.

The victor was the son of the tyrant Cobhthaigh, and knowing the deficiency of his title, he did every thing in his power to ingratiate himself in the good opinion of the people. He extended the constitutional charter so far as to embrace in its scope, all those privileges which can guard and secure the privileges of the subject. In consequence of his legislative enactments, he was honoured with the title of “The Praiseworthy.” But in these ages the popularity of the monarch was but a feeble safeguard to protect the throne from revolt; MEILGE was slain by Modh-chorb, of the house of Heber, in battle, in the seventh year of his reign, A. M. 3685. This Prince was the first of the Heberian dynasty, who was elevated to the Irish throne, since Jughaine the Great passed his famous decree of exclusion against them.

The royal historian of Cashel designates Modh-chorb with the additional appellation of *Clare*, as his palace of residence was in that town. His reign of seven years is not distinguished by any event of importance in our annals. He died in battle with his successor, Aongus, A. M. 3692. Aongus II. called in consequence of his erudition, Aongus Ollamh, or the doctor, was the grand son of *Maon*, whose memory the Irish cherished with veneration. This prince possessed great military talents, and a courage that gave them full scope. If we can credit O'Halloran, he carried the terror of his arms into Greece, as the ally of the Gauls. While he was pursuing his conquests in foreign countries, his successor, *Jaran Gleofathock*, promoted an insurrection, which recalled home the monarch in order to quell it; but he fell in the first engagement he fought after his return to his kingdom, A. M. 3710, in the eighteenth year of his age. The Book of Reigns styles Aongus the “Victorious Conqueror of Greece.” “When we compare,” writes O'Halloran, “this relation with the accounts given us by Greek and Roman writers, of the irruption of the Gauls into Greece, and note how exactly the reign of Aongus accords with the time of this remarkable invasion, we must, I apprehend, be convinced that our annals deserve the highest credit.”

CHAPTER XVII.

The reigns of Jarero, Fearchorb, Conla, Olioll III.—of Adamar, Eochaidh VIII., Feargus, and of Aongus III. who was the ally of the Carthaginians.—The accession of Connall—of Niadh—Eanda—Criomthan—Ruighruidhe—of Jonadhbar—Breasal—Lughaidh IV.—The law of Tanistry, and reign of Connall.

A. M. 3710. JARERO did not enjoy the regal power but for the period of seven years ; at the expiration of which he was vanquished, and slain in battle, by his successor, FEARCHORB, of the house of Heber, who, after a reign of eleven years, was in his turn cut off by CONLA, the son of *Jaran Gleofathach*, A. M. 3722. This monarch died a natural death at the palace of Tara, after a peaceable reign of five years. His son, OLIOILL, ascended the throne without the opposition of a rival. His reign of twenty-five years is not celebrated in our annals for any eminent event or martial exploit. He fell in an engagement with his successor, ADAMAR, of the royal line of Heber. He married, according to the relation of the regal historian of Cashel, the fair *Fledhis*, the princess of Connaught. He fell a victim to the avenging sword of EOCHAIIDH, the son of Olioll, in the fifth year of his reign. This monarch's reign of eleven years, of which nothing particular is recorded, was terminated by the hand of FEARGUS *Fortamhuil*, or Feargus of the strong arm. This Prince, on ascending the throne, displayed a consummate genius for giving lustre to his royal station. After enacting wise laws for the government of the state, he passed over to his colony of Albany, and thence into Gaul, where he and his army nobly distinguished themselves against the Romans. But an insurrection, headed by AONGUS, compelled him to return home from his foreign conquests, and to engage his competitor, by whom he was slain, near Tara, A. M. 3778. The monarch, AONGUS, who was known by the appellation of *Tuirmheach*, or the bashful, was the son of Eochaidh VIII. Few kings acquired such eminent celebrity in our annals, as Aongus ; for his virtues and his vices have equally contributed to consecrate his name to historic fame. O'Flaherty, Keating, and Molloy, adduce an irrefragable chain of historical evidence to prove that the gallant Aongus, and the *Irish militia*, or the "*sacra et dilecta cohors*," performed prodigies of heroism, as the allies of Carthage, during the second Punic war.

Dr. O'Halloran, a man as conversant with classic literature and antiquities, as any historian of his day, in narrating the exploits of Aongus beyond the Alps, observes:—"The Irish, far from being idle spectators of this war, were deeply engaged in it, as the old allies of the Carthaginians. I have already offered my reasons why I supposed the Irish were the most friendly and powerful allies of Carthage. * * * * * The Carthaginian swords found near the plains of Cannae, and presented by Sir William Hamilton to the British museum, being found in figure, texture, and length, exactly similar to our ancient ones, adds strength to my conjectures. It has been remarked by Roman writers, that the swords

of the Gauls were of bad metal, frequently bent, and easily broke and battered ; but by the report of the assay-master of the British mint, the Carthaginian and Irish swords were of mixed metal, highly elastic, and polished, bore a very sharp edge, and so formed as to suffer no injury by time or climate. Here, then, is Roman testimony furnished as to the make of their arms, to distinguish the Irish and their allies from the other confederates and enemies of Rome."

In the course of the preceding chapters, we have advanced other opinions to sustain, on tenable grounds, the hypothesis of O'Halloran.

But on the return of Aongus to his kingdom, the diabolical crime of incest, committed during the madness of intoxication, with his own daughter, tarnished the glory of his exploits, and rendered the remainder of his days the source of remorse and shame. The fruit of this disgraceful and unnatural connexion, was a son, who, the moment after his birth, was arrayed in rich purple garments, decorated with jewels, and conveyed privately to an open boat, which was set adrift in the ocean. The boat, however, had not been borne far on the receding waves, when it was discovered by some fishermen, who humanely took the poor infant on board of their vessel, and kindly administered to its wants. The gorgeous dress of the hapless babe proclaimed the rank of its unnatural parent, who, in some years subsequently acknowledged the Prince, and bestowed large possessions on him in Ulster. He was called *Fiacha Prionsa an Mara*, or the Prince of the sea. "From the posterity of this child," says Dr. Warner, "thus exposed to almost certain destruction either by famine or the waters—so amazing and powerful are the works of Providence, came the royal line of Scotland—the progenitors, on the British side, of our own illustrious monarch." The son of Fiacha became afterwards monarch of Ulster ; and his descendants, the O'Connells, O'Connors, M'Dermotts, M'Loughlins, O'Farrels, O'Dwyers, O'Ryan, Murphies, and O'Tooles, are the proudest names that illuminate the Irish annals.*

* "Many of the successors of Fiacha became kings of Munster as well as of Scotland ; and by the female line, his present majesty, George III. is descended. Indeed, upon a close investigation of the matter, it appears that children got out of wedlock, formerly were very far from being held in a disrespectful light. We behold Agamemnon, encouraging *Teucer*, the illegitimate son of *Telamon*, (the father of *Ajax*) to pursue the heroic steps of his brother. Ulysses confesses himself the son of a concubine, (Vide *Ody. lib. IV. ver. 202.*) Gideon, though a judge of Israel, had seventy children (Vide *Judges, chap. IX.*) by different women, and yet Abimelech, the issue of a concubine, and even his servant, was chosen king of Sechem ! The children of Jacob, got on the bodies of his wives' handmaids, are ranked with his legitimate ones. The bastard of Normandy became king of England. Thiery, according to Selden, a natural son to Clovis, ranked as his other children. In Ireland, in the present and in many succeeding instances, we shall see illegitimate children enjoy every rank and dignity in the state, which their blood entitled them to ; and some of the most illustrious families in the kingdom, derive their origin from similar sources, as the O'Connors, O'Loughlins, McRannels, &c."—O'HALLORAN.

"From the line of Fiacha, are descended the O'Connors of Kerry and Sligo."—Vide *Brian O'Connor's History of the County of Kerry.*

"Roderick O'Connor was directly descended from Fergus Mac Roy, king of

Aongus lived to an old age, and after a reign of forty years, was assassinated in a grove at Tara, by his nephew and successor, **CONNALL Callambrach**. The guilty Connall did not long enjoy the power to which cruelty and ingratitude raised him. He was slain in battle by **NIADH**, of the house of Heber, in the fifth year of his reign. The Book of Munster relates that the mother of this Prince was skilled in magic, and that it was by necromantic spells she enchain-ed victory to the standard of her son; but this is only the poetic fiction of some of our ancient bards—for the charms of the sorceress were dissolved by **EANDA Artac**, or Eanda the bountiful—a designation bestowed upon him for his munificent generosity. There is nothing of importance recorded of this king, save that, like hundreds of his predecessors, his reign of twenty years was closed by the sword, in an engagement with **CRIMOTHAN**, whose victory won the Irish crown, A. M. 3841. Criomthan had distinguished himself in the last reign, by his courage and intrepidity as a warrior. He was the grandson of Feargus, the monarch; so that he came to the throne recommended by birth and martial fame. The army were enthusiastically attached to his government. He was called *Crosgrach*, which in Irish signifies the sanguinary slaughterer, in consequence of his destructive execution in fight. The fate which attended so many of his predecessors' defeat in battle, deprived him of life and crown, in the seventh year of his reign. The victor and successor to the throne, was **RUIGHRUIDHE**, whom our annalists honour with the appellation of "the Great." This Prince was the son of *Sithrighe*, of the dynasty of Ir, and was the first of his house, since the famous compact made with Jughaine-More, who had the courage to secede from its stipulations, and assert the rights of his blood. Irish poets and historians have extolled the glorious achievements of Ruighruidhe at the head of his militia, while in conjunction with the brave Masinissa, in the wars of Asdrubal against Scipio. After the termination of the third Punic war, and the destruction of Carthage, the monarch, with the remnant of his army, returned to his kingdom, where he died, at the palace of Airgiodross, in the thirtieth year of his reign. The posterity of this renowned monarch were distinguished in Irish history by the patronymic designation of "*Clana Ruighruidhe*."

The estates of Tara elected **JONADHBHAR**, of the dynasty of Heber, monarch of Ireland. He, as soon as the ceremonies of his coronation were over, embarked at Belfast for Albany, where he compelled the Picts to pay him tribute and do him the homage of feudatory vassals. Scarcely had he thus humbled the Albanians, when the revolt and disaffection of **BREASAL Bodhiabha**, of the line of Ir, called him home, where, on coming to an engagement with his daring adversary, he lost his life and crown, in the third year of his reign. The victor, of course, took possession of the throne from which he was, in his turn, hurled by his successor, **LUGHAIÐH IV**. The reason that Breasal had the surname of *Bodhiabha*, was because a destructive murrain raged amongst black cattle, at the period of his govern-

Ulster, by the famous *Meabha*, Queen of Connaught. From this source also sprang the O'Connors of Corcomroe, as well as those of Roscommon."—CHARLES O'CONNOR.

ment. Lughaidh, who was called *Luighne*, in consequence of his having been educated at the court of Leinster, in Ferns,* is represented as a very learned Prince by our historians. The Psalter of Cashel records, that it was this monarch originated the law and honours of *Tanistry*. The *Tanist* we are informed by the learned Dr. O'Conry, (who was Roman Catholic Dean of Cloyne, in 1740,) in his valuable "*Collectanea of Irish Antiquities*," was generally "the *Rígh Damnha*, or crown Prince; as Lughaidh invested his son, Criomthan, with the dignity and authorities of the office."†

"We have seen," says Mr. Moore, "that from the earliest times of which her traditions preserve the memory, Ireland was divided into a certain number of small principalities, each governed by its own petty king, or dynast, and the whole subordinate to a supreme monarch, who had nominally, but seldom really, a control over their proceedings. This form of polity, which continued to be maintained, without any essential innovation upon its principle, down to the Conquest of the country by Henry II. was by no means peculiar to Ireland, but was the system common to the whole Celtic, if not Teutonic race, and like all other primitive institutions of Europe, had its origin in the east. Without going so far back as the land of Canaan, in the time of Joshua, where every city could boast its

* FERNs, which was for ages the royal capital of Leinster, is agreeably situated on the picturesque banks of the Bann, near the junction of that fine river with the Slaney, at the distance of 72 miles S. E. from Dublin. Ferns, as a Bishop's See was united to Leighlin, A. D. 1600. This town, according to Ware, takes its name from the hero Farna, son of Cari, king of the Decies, who was slain here in battle, by Gallus, the son of Morna. Before the invasion of the English, this see was archiepiscopal, as in the early ages of Christianity, the title of Arch-Bishop, in Ireland, except that of Armagh, was not confined to any particular diocese, but sometimes belonged to one, and sometimes to another, according to the fame and sanctity of the prelate who presided. In the noble and affecting ruins of Ferns, the antiquary and historian will find much to attract attention, and awaken reflection. Among the reliques of its pristine architectural grandeur, the fallen battlements and broken columns, that once adorned, in "pillared state," the majestic palace of Dermot, King of Leinster, are eminently conspicuous, and reverentially antique. The cathedral, though modernized in aspect, and "curtailed in the fair proportions," which once gave it such a venerable and solemn air, is yet a superb ecclesiastical structure. Near the ancient marble altar, in the great aisle, is the monument of the first Bishop of this See, St. Munge, who was also the founder of the abbey, which he erected here, A. D. 713, for regular Canons, under the invocation of the Holy Virgin. The episcopal palace, which was built in 1788, by Bishop Cope, is a beautiful specimen of Ionic architecture. Its marble portico, lofty dome, and copper-covered roof, cannot be excelled by any prelatical residence in Ireland. The Glebe house is also large and elegant. There cannot be a more beautiful vicinity, than that which encompasses Ferns; as every road leading from it, passes through flowery lawns, that are arcaded with the luxuriant foliage of oaks, elms, and sycamores. Camolin Park, the enchanting residence of Lord Valentia, can boast of a magnificence of architecture, and a beauty of domain-scenery, which a Barry would love to depict, and a Moore to describe.—AUTHOR.

† "The *Rígh Damnha* was, I am inclined to think, the presumptive heir to the crown, and often general of the national troops—whereas the *Tanist* was but the heir to a lordship; so that, in consequence, the laws of tanistry were only applicable to the succession to patrimonial estates."—LYNCH.

"The Irish had for ages their laws of tanistry and gavel kind; the former for the lords of every sept, the latter for lands and family estates. The law of tanistry, like the will of Alexander, gave the inheritance to the strongest; because it appears that seniority, if it was not accompanied with superior talent, policy, and experience, was very little or not at all recorded."—WARNER.

own king, we find that the small and narrow territory of the Phœnicians was in a similar manner, parcelled out into kingdoms, and from Homer's account of the separate dominions of the Grecian chiefs, it would seem that they also were constructed upon the same Canaanite pattern. The feeling of clanship, indeed, out of which this sort of government by a chieftainry sprung, appears to have prevailed strongly in Greece and to have been one of the great cements of all their confederations, war-like or political.

In none of these countries, however, do the title and power of royalty appear to have been partitioned into such minute divisions and sub-divisions as in the provincial government of Ireland, where in addition to the chief king of each province, every subordinate prince, or head of a large district, assumed the title of king, and exercised effectually, within his own dominions, all the powers of sovereignty, even to the prerogative of making war not only with his coequal princes, but with the king of the whole province, whenever he could muster up a party sufficiently strong for such an enterprise. To the right of primogeniture so generally acknowledged in those ages, no deference whatever was paid by the Irish. Within the circle of the near kin of the reigning prince, all were alike eligible to succeed him; so that the succession may be said to have been hereditary as to the blood, but elective as to the person. Not only the monarch himself was created thus by election, but a successor, or *Tanist*, was, during his life-time, assigned to him by the same process: and as if the position alone of heir apparent did not render him sufficiently formidable to the throne, the law, in the earlier ages, also, it is said, conferred on him the right of being chief general of the army and chief judge of the whole state or kingdom. For the succession to the minor thrones a similar provision was made: to every petty king a successor was, in like manner appointed, with powers proportioned to those of his chief; and thus, in addition to the constant dissension of all these princes amongst themselves, each saw by his side an adult and powerful rival, chosen generally without any reference to his own choice or will; and as mostly happens, even where the successor is so by hereditary right, forming an authorized rallying point for the ambitious and disaffected."

The learned author of the "*Dissertation on the laws of the ancient Irish*" in his observations on the character and power of the *Tanists* (or *Thanists*, as the erudite lexicographer, O'Reilly, spells them) writes, "who ever knows any of Irish history will readily agree, that an Irish *Thanist* of a royal family, even after those of that quality were deprived of judiciary power, and not always invested with the actual command of the army, was, notwithstanding, held in such high consideration, as to be esteemed nothing less than a secondary king. The title of rígh damhna, meaning king, in fieri, was generally given to the presumptive successor of the reigning king." It was from the unfortunate jealousies and dissensions of these provincial kings, that the subjugation of the entire nation resulted; for we find them, on several occasions, arrayed against the chief monarch, under the banners of Danish and English invaders. O'Reilly, in his admirable essay on the "*Brehon laws*," says in allusion to the fatal

discord which prevailed amongst the Thanists :—"The annals of the country bear unanimous testimony to the melancholy truths, that in these plundering expeditions, they (the Danes) were frequently aided by some of the native Irish princes, who, either anxious to diminish the preponderating power of some neighbouring chieftain, or desirous to revenge some real or imaginary insult received, or perhaps, willing to share in the spoils of an opulent rival, were always forward to join the common enemy."

The crown of Ireland encircled the brows of Lughaidh only for five years, at the lapse of which time, the victorious arm of CONNALL *Claringneach*, of the Irian dynasty, deprived him of it and of life at once. Shortly after his accession to the throne, he raised a formidable army, at the head of which he marched into Munster, where he levied contributions, and committed all the flagrant outrages and licentious excesses, with which a rapacious conqueror could oppress the conquered. But *Cairbre Luisg*, the king of Munster, made a brave stand against the proud invader, under the walls of Cashel, and succeeded in utterly annihilating him and all his forces.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The accession of Duach to the throne of Ireland.—His cruel conduct to his brother Deaghadh.—The reigns of Fiachtna and of Eochaidh IX.—Partition of Ireland—and the origin of the palace of Cruachan, in Connaught.

The victory gained by the king of Munster, at Cashel, over Connall the monarch, as related in our last chapter, put, as it were, the keys of the sovereignty into his hands; but as Cairbre was old, he renounced his right in favour of his eldest son, DUACH, whose valour had so materially contributed to the glorious result of the late decisive battle. He was, therefore, solemnly crowned at Tara, on the stone of destiny, A. M. 3912. The elevation of Duach to the monarchy, filled the breast of his brother, DEAGHADH, with jealousy and envy. Under the influence of these passions, which often debase our nature, and break through those bonds that blood and gratitude have pronounced inviolable, the ambitious Prince resolved to possess himself of the crown by the force of the sword. He and his followers were not long in fanning the flame of disaffection, or in fomenting to a violent effervescence, the leaven of rebellion. Before, however, the Prince and his adherents were ready to take the field openly, the monarch was apprised of the existence of the secret mine of treason, which was ready to explode, as it were, under his throne. He quickly adopted means to frustrate his brother's plans, and avert the danger that impended over his head. A Druid was despatched by the monarch, to his brother, with an invitation to Court. Deaghadh, no doubt desirous of ascertaining the strength of the army at Tara, gladly accepted the invitation. On his arrival at the palace, and as he was sitting down to a banquet, the monarch, in the presence

of the Druids and nobles, impeached him for treason and ingratitude; and then giving a signal, two executioners entered the royal hall, who, seizing the Prince, put out his eyes. In relation to this transaction, Dr. Keating observes, that as "any bodily imperfection rendered a pretender to the throne of Ireland incompetent to reign, the deprivation of eyes made Deaghadh incapable of pursuing his ambitious designs on the Irish crown." This was, we are informed by the royal historian of Cashel, the first instance of this cruel species of torture inflicted on princes in Ireland. McDairy, in his valuable elegies, furnishes us with the plaintive odes, in which Eithne, the Queen of Munster, bewailed the punishment of her son, Deaghadh. These affecting effusions are so replete with maternal tenderness and sympathetic grief, that we shall shortly give elsewhere, a literal translation of them.

This tale has been, we think, without doubt, foisted into Irish history by some bard whose judgment was deluded by imagination into the labyrinths of fiction.

"The learned O'Flaherty treats the above narration," says O'Halloran, "as a fable; he maintains that Duach had no brother, and that he got the epithet *Dalta* Deaghadh, from the generous reception he afforded to the exiled Deaghadh, and from his adopting him as his child. But neither the Psalter of Cashel, nor the Book of Lecan, which he quotes on this occasion, justify his assertion; to the reverse, the first is my authority for what has been said."

Dr. Keating concurs with O'Halloran, in asserting that Deaghadh was the legitimate brother of the monarch, and not his foster-child, as alleged by O'Flaherty and Warner.

Duach, having exacted an oppressive tribute from the Ultonians, they, at the call of FIACHTNA, an Irian Prince, rose in arms to avenge the aggression. The hostile parties came to an engagement, at Killenchoole,* near Dundalk, in the county of Louth, where the monarch's army was overthrown, and himself slain, A. M. 3922. Deaghadh succeeded his father Carbre on the throne of Munster,†

* KILLENCOOLE.—The ruins of Killenchoole castle are still in good preservation. This feudal structure was built in 1312, by Colonel Mapus, who killed Prince Edward Bruce at the battle of Dundalk. Contiguous to this venerable castle, stands a fine modern mansion, lately inhabited by James Caraher, Esq. From the battlements of the castle, a beautiful and romantic view of the Mourne mountains, Dundalk bay, and of the picturesque scenery of Clermont Park, Darver, Stephentown, Fane Valley, Corderry, Lurgan-green, and Bragganstown, can be commanded. In our description of *Irish Caves*, we have already spoken of the caverns and subterraneous apartments that belong to this castle. Some of these vaults are twelve feet square; from one of these a cave runs to the castle of Darver, a mile distant. To judge from this subterraneous communication, we agree with Dr. Wright in his history of Louth, that these castles, during the warfare of feudal chieftains, mutually assisted each other. The cemetery, parish church, and ruined priory of Killenchoole, are situated about half a mile westward of the castle, near the road leading to Ardee.—AUTHOR.

† "The two southern provinces took the name of *Mumha* from Eochaidh, monarch of Ireland, several ages before the incarnation. It was inhabited by the south Iberians, named *Juvernî*, who took their name from Eber-Finn, the eldest son of Gollamh, of Spain, the common father of the Milesian race. Some time before the birth of Christ, the Earnaidhs of Ulster, of the posterity of Olioll-Aron, obtain-

and our annalists praise him for the wisdom and justice of his administration. The victory of Killencoole paved the way for Fiachtna to the throne, which he mounted without opposition. The talents of this Prince were equally calculated for the field, and the cabinet; and his regal government of sixteen years is highly lauded by our historians for its prudence and policy. But virtue, in these times, was no security against ambition. The aspiring EOCHADH, of the dynasty of Heremon, promoted a revolt, which put a period to the life and reign of Fiachtna, at the battle of Dromchriadh, in the county of Galway. Eochaidh IX. immediately after the death of his predecessor, proceeded to Tara, where the servile Druids cheerfully placed the royal diadem on his head. The mother of this Prince, was *Benia*, daughter of Criomthan, son to the monarch Lughaidh. Eochaidh was known by the distinctive appellation of *Feid-lich*, or the wailing king of sadness, in consequence of the melancholy dejection which he frequently expressed, in heavy sighs, after the death of his three sons, at the battle which gave him the possession of the crown. "The word *Feid*," says Keating, "in the Irish, signifies as much as a great length, in English—and *Och!* is the Irish term for a sigh, which gave occasion to his name." The grief of the monarch for the three gallant youths, whom he so affectionately loved, preyed acutely upon his spirits until he descended to his grave. His Queen, Clooth, called *Fionn*, or the fair, was the mother of these warrior Princes at one birth; hence they were denominated the three "*Finneamhna*," or the issue of the fair Queen, born at once. This monarch, having no son to succeed to his crown, came to the determination of parcelling out the five provinces as principalities for his relatives and favourites. By adopting this mode, he abrogated the established ordinances of Hugony, and made, as it were, himself the absolute head of a pentarchial government, extending over the five principalities of Munster, Leinster, Connaught, Ulster, and Meath.* At this juncture, Connaught was governed by its own hereditary Princes of the Danaan race, who did not feel quite disposed to the delegated viceroyalty of Eochaidh. But the boldness and spirit of the remonstrance which the Connaught chiefs transmitted

ed great power in Munster, under their leader, Deaghadh, who afterwards became king of the province, which was afterwards governed by his descendants until the invasion of Strongbow."—O'CONNOR.

* "MEATH, during the Milesian monarchy, always appertained to the crown, as the private domain of the reigning sovereign."—O'FLAHERTY.

It was in the reign of Henry VIII. that the district of Meath was divided into two counties, as appears by the following extract, which we take from HOLINSHED:

"In the four and thirtieth year of king Henrie the eighth, it was enacted in a *Parlement* holden at Dublin, before Sir Anthony Sainteleger, knight, Lord Deputie of Irelande, that *Meeth* should be divided and made into two shires, one of them to be called the countie of Meeth, the other to be called the county of West Meeth, and that there should be sheriffes and officers convenient within the same shires, as is more fully expressed in the act aforesaid."

The county of Meath is thirty-six Irish miles long, and thirty-five broad. It contained, according to a report laid before the Catholic Association, in 1826, 147 parishes, and a population of 114,793 souls. West Meath is 38 Irish miles long and 24 in breadth, comprehending 63 parishes, whose aggregate population amounted in 1826, to 75,000 inhabitants.

to the court of Tara, for the purpose of intimidating Eochaidh, instead of awakening a sense of justice in the mind of the monarch, served, on the contrary, to provoke his indignation. He, in this spirit, summoned the national representatives, and in a warm speech, in which he drew an exaggerated picture of the ambition of the Connacian Princes, and intimated that the safety of the state rendered it absolutely necessary to reduce them to a more abject dependence on the monarchy of Ireland. The legislative body readily gave their sanction to the measures, which the King proposed for the attainment of his purpose.

To carry his plan into effect, he resolved, like Constantine, to remove the seat of government, and to build a palace in Connaught, which should exceed in magnificence of architecture that of Tara. The architectural genius of the kingdom was, in consequence, called into action on this occasion. The Druids, after offering sacrifices to the sun, and performing the rites and ceremonies usual on such occasions, told the monarch that the propitious site of the intended palace should be at *Druim na Ndruidh*, an eminence in the county of Roscommon, now known by the name of *Cruachan*. The King, with a numerous retinue of courtiers, architects, and sculptors, set out for Connaught, in order to commence the great work. As soon as he had arrived, he despatched heralds to the tributary Princes, requiring their immediate attendance at Cruachan. They speedily waited upon him. When they came into his presence, he informed them of his design, and then intimated to each of the astonished chiefs the quota of money, marble, oak, and artisans, which he had to furnish to the completion of the structure. Two of these Princes, *Eochaidh-Allat* and *Fiodhaidh*, having more spirit than prudence, in their present circumstances, absolutely refused conformity to the requisition, and asserted that as they had, as tributary Princes, paid their allotted proportion of the royal taxes, and imposts, they were, therefore, determined to submit to no other exactions, except a decree of the national convention would render it imperative on them to make the demanded contribution. This bold and energetic declaration was scarcely uttered, when another Prince, *Tinne*, the son of Conrach, then Prince of Galway and Sligo, professed his cheerful willingness to contribute his quota. The monarch, feeling as highly gratified at the prompt acquiescence of *Tinne*, as he did before enraged at the refusal of his compeers, assured him that, as a token of his satisfaction and esteem, he would not only reward him with the hand of his daughter, the famous and lovely *Meibhe*, but also with the territories of the refractory Princes. On the following day, the Arch-Druid united *Tinne* and *Meibhe* in the bonds of matrimony. The building of the Palace was soon completed; for we are told by Keating and O'Flaherty, that so great was the number and application of the workmen, that the immense rampart which surrounded the majestic pile, and numerous courts, was completed in one day. The magnanimity, noble bearing, and attractive manners of *Tinne*, won the favour and affection of the monarch, who appointed him his heir, and caused him to be crowned king of Connaught. On the day of the inauguration of his son and daughter,

he made them a present of his new palace, which then bore the name of *Rath Eochaidh*; but the young Queen, after her father's departure for Tara, called it, in honour of her mother, the Palace of *Cruachan*, by which designation it is known at the present day. Dr. Keating, in relation to these occurrences, quotes the lines in which an ancient poet commemorated them:—

“The royal Palace of Rath Eochaidh,
Was called Druin Druagh and Tuluig Aidne;
But afterwards obtained a nobler name,
Of RATH CRUACHAN, from the virtuous lady,
Cruachan Crodhearg.”——

Eochaidh, borne down by inconsolable sorrow, occasioned, as we have already mentioned, by the death of his three sons, died at Tara, in the twelfth year of his reign. After his obsequies were performed, with great pomp, at Tara, his body, in conformity with his dying request, was interred in the cemetery of Cruachan.*

Tinne, on whom the Connacian Princes looked with an eye of vindictive jealousy, was slain about this period by *Maceacht*, the son of one of the expelled Princes; but as the brother of Eochaidh, the late monarch, succeeded to the throne of Ireland, he sent an army into Connaught, to maintain the rights of his niece, as sole Queen of the province. This Queen, who is so celebrated in our history, for her learning, beauty, and gallantries, after the lapse of ten years, subsequent to her late husband's death, during which period her administration was signally eminent for wisdom, clemency, and talent, in obedience to the wishes of her uncle, the monarch, married OLIOLL More, brother to Carbre, king of Leinster, and of the dynasty of Heremon. This union not only appeased the angry complaints of the Connacians, who were dissatisfied under the sceptre of a woman, but effectually secured their loyalty; for Olioll was a native of their own province, as his mother was *Matha Muircarg*, the daughter of one of their Princes; so that his participation in their government silenced the clamours of disaffection, and deranged the plans of conspirators.

* “Eochaidh IX. and many other of our heathen kings, were buried in the royal cemetery of *Relic na Riogh*, (the grave of the kings) at Cruachan, in the county of Roscommon. Dathy was the last pagan monarch interred here. The place, which is gone to decay, is of a circular form, encompassed with a rampart faced with stone, and planted with hawthorn trees. This “Hill of Graves,” is one hundred and sixteen yards in diameter. Golden urns and helmets have been found in it.”—BRIAN O'CONNOR.

“We find this place celebrated in the days of St. Patrick, as one of the royal houses of Loaghair.”—O'HALLORAN.

CHAPTER XIX.

Reign of Eochaidh X.—The Queen of Connaught prevails on her husband to invade Ulster.—Her intrigue with Fergus, the Crown Prince of Ulster.—The loves of Naisi and Deidre, and their death.

THE brother of the late monarch of Ireland, Eochaidh IX. as narrated in our last chapter, ascended the throne, under the assumed name of Eochaidh, by which designation he concluded he would at once strengthen his popularity, and evince a due reverence for the memory of his fraternal predecessor. His coronation was celebrated with the most magnificent splendour at Tara.

All the provincial Princes, and their wives, with the ladies of their courts, attended to give pomp and eclat to the gorgeous spectacle which this inauguration exhibited. The fair and graceful *Meibhe*, Queen of Connaught, did the honours of the court on this occasion, and her peerless charms and fascinating manners, eclipsed all rival beauties, and concentrated the esteem and admiration of that circle, in which she shone as the moon among the stars. Fergus, the nephew of Connor, king of Ulster, and the heir apparent of the throne, was captivated by her loveliness; she attracted every feeling of passion that desire can kindle in the heart of man; but her marriage with another, placed a barrier in the way of his affection. Hope, however, told him that this barrier was not insurmountable; and influenced by the promises of this deity of lovers, he availed himself of the first opportunity that offered to make known to the Queen, the passion with which she inspired him. At the moment Fergus made this declaration, the bosom of *Meibhe* glowed with a kindred flame; for the Prince of Ulster, we are told by our annalists, was the flower of chivalry, and the paragon of manly beauty.

As soon as the lovers understood each other, they privately gave themselves up to the indulgence of their criminal desires; and so secretly did they manage their clandestine assignations, that they evaded the jealousy of her husband, Olioll, and the suspicion of the prying courtiers, who are generally as watchful of the progress of love intrigues in a palace, as Argus was of the amours of Jupiter and Io. When the king and Queen of Connaught were returning to their own home, they solicited Fergus to accompany them, and become their guest at Cruachan.

The Prince, as the reader may suppose, joyfully accepted the invitation. At this period, Olioll was eighty years of age, so that Fergus and the Queen easily carried on their illicit enjoyments, so as to elude his vigilance, and have no grounds for his jealousy. The fruit of this adulterous love, was three boys called respectively Ciar, Corc and Commac, from whom some of the most distinguished Irish chieftains have sprung.

“Ciar, the eldest,” says Keating, “gave names to *Ciaruidh*, (Kerry,) from Corc, is derived the illustrious O’Connor’s of Offally; and from Commac, sprang all the worthy families of the Commainies in Connaught. To illustrate this with more authority, I refer to a

very ancient poem, composed by Lughair, an eminent Poet and antiquary of the fifth century; the first verse begins thus, *Clana, Feargusa, Clana os Cach*:—when it appears evidently, that the three sons of *Meibhe Cruachan*, obtained possessions and authority, as well in the province of Connaught, as in Munster, which may be further proved by observing, that the counties in those two provinces, are known by the names of these Princes until this day.”*

While Fergus was thus intoxicated with the stolen transports of clandestine love, he was roused from the dream of delusion, by a peremptory mandate from his uncle, the king of Ulster, commanding his immediate attendance at the palace of Emania.

With the behests of this summons, a sense of duty compelled him to comply, however painful the separation from the fair object of his affections might prove to his feelings. When Fergus arrived at the palace of Ulster, his uncle informed him, that *Naisi* or *Naois*, his sister's son, by *Usnach*,† had seduced a beautiful lady of the name of *Deidre*, from under his protection, with whom he eloped to *Albania*. The king further signified to him, that the fugitives were received with high honours of hospitality, at the *Albanian* court, which he considered a contravention of the amicable and friendly relation, which heretofore subsisted between the courts of *Ullin* and *Albania*; and that in consequence, he had declared war against the *Albanian* king, whose territories he purposed to invade with a potent army, of which he appointed him (Fergus) the chief. But the heart of Fergus at this moment, was the slave of Cupid; it repudiated Mars, and abjured the passion of military glory; and like the infatuated Roman, he could renounce the honours and wealth of the world, for the blissful caresses of the Irish *Cleopatra*, the Queen of Connaught.

* “Fergus Mac Roy, (or the king's son) was expelled from Ulster, by his uncle Connor, the reigning king. He was kindly received by the famous *Meibhe*, Queen of Connaught, who fell in love with him and bore him three sons, the remote ancestors of the O'Connor family.”—O'FLAHERTY.

“By that amorous heroine, Fergus got three sons, the fathers of several great families in Munster and Connaught.”—CHARLES O'CONNOR.

“From this source, however, discreditable in its origin, came the regal O'Connors of Kerry, Clare, Roscommon, Sligo and Offally.”—BRIAN O'CONNOR.

† “*Usnach* was the chieftain of Donegal, who flourished about a century before Christ; he married the Princess *Alva*, the sister of Connor McNess, king of Ulster, with whom he became the father of *Naisi*, *Ainli* and *Arden*, as we are informed by the genealogist of the O'Neils—in the Irish poem, which we have rendered into English for these transactions. The following stanza alludes to the renowned sons of *Usnach*, or *Visneach* as Keating has it.

“*Alva*'s three sons, impetuous in the fight,
Were *Naisi*, *Ainli*,—*Arden*'s conquering might,” &c.

Transactions of the Gaelic Society.

“*Cuchullin* and *Connal Carnach*, whose gallant achievements have afforded such a scope to the genius of the Irish Bards, were also the nephews of Connor by his sisters, *Detin* and *Finaeva*, as the Minstrel sings—

“From *Detin* heav'nly fair! *Cuchullin* came,
Whom high *Dundalgan* honor'd with its name;
A heroic chief! Son of a warrior sire,
Swept the wide field, and made whole hosts retire,
—*Finaeva*, the snow-necked fair,
Own'd *Connal Carnach* her illustrious heir.”

Vide Leahy's translation of the death of the sons of Usnach.

His arguments and remonstrances, however, so far prevailed with the king, that he consented to send Fergus to the Albanian court, as his ambassador, invested with powers to demand reparation and tribute from the king of that country, as well as the surrender of Naisi and Deidre to his custody. Fergus undertook this mission, with that pleasure and alacrity which spring from two powerful motives—friendship and love. He was the cousin and attached friend of Naisi, whom he hoped to have quickly reinstated in the cordial graces of his uncle, which when accomplished, there would be no grounds for his detention from the beloved mistress of his heart. He, therefore, set out on his embassy, with a determination of having its object speedily attained. As the fatal charms of Deidre produced as disastrous evils in Ireland, as those of Helen did in Troy, we shall give here a succinct account of the celebrated *Ultonian* beauty.*

Shortly after Connor's accession to the throne of Ulster, his prime minister and chief laureate, FEIDHLIM, invited the monarch and all his nobility to a sumptuous entertainment, which he gave on the occasion of the birth of a daughter. When the infant was presented, the Arch-Druid and Prophet, exhibited looks and gesticulations expressive of the utmost horror. All present, were struck with fear and amazement. In answer to the king's inquiry of the cause of such a strange indication, the Druid declared that the child was born to bring disaster and destruction upon Ulster, and that its beauty would inflame the hearts of Princes and chieftains with such destructive fires of love, revenge and jealousy, as would reduce the lofty domes of Emania to a heap of ashes. This appalling prediction, thrilled every bosom with the feelings of apprehension and dread;—and the king anxiously asked, how the threatened fate might be averted. The Druid replied, that nothing could cancel the decree of destiny, but the instant death of the child, as a propitiatory oblation on the altar of Bel. No sooner had the Druid expressed this opinion, than all the company, except the parents of the devoted infant, unanimously called for the expiatory sacrifice.

But the king said that he would never give his sanction to the violent death of a smiling innocent. "I will take care," said he, "to disappoint the accomplishment of the prophecy, by breeding up the child under my own inspection, and, perhaps, when she arrives at maturity of years, I may marry her, for she that is so perfectly beautiful as a babe, must grow up a charming maid of the most fas-

* "On the subjection of Ireland, by the Milesians, and after Heremon made a partition of the whole Island into five districts, Ulster, comprehending the nine northern counties of Donegal, Londonderry, Antrim, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Armagh, Down, Monaghan and Cavan, were assigned to his nephew, Heber, as a feudatory principality."—*Hamilton's letters on the Statistics of Ulster*.

"What name Ulster bore under the early Milesian Princes, is not known. In Ollamh Fodhla's time, or soon after, it got the name of *Uladh*, in memory, it is said, of the renowned regal legislator. It continued under that appellation, until the fifth century; when it was dismembered by the Hy Nialls. The ancient geographers, denominated the several tribes of this province, by the distinctive appellation of *Clanna Ruraighdhe*, and *Clanne Ultaidh*, the latter of which is in use to this day, among the native Irish."—*Dissertations on the history of Ireland*.

cinating loveliness. As Queen of Ulster, she will be a blessing to my subjects instead of an evil." The servile nobles assented to the wishes of the king; but the stern Druid boldly asserted, that human power could not frustrate the fulfilment of a divination that was prompted by the deity. Thus was the fate, to which the infant Deidre was then doomed, surmounted.

The king having obtained a reluctant permission from the bereaved parents, had the child given in charge to a proper nurse, and removed to one of the strongest towers of his palace. Here no person was to be admitted without presenting the governess, Leabharcham, a written order, bearing the signature and signet of the king.

This nurse and Governess of Deidre, was, we are told by our annalists, a woman of elegant accomplishments; who was not only a proficient in music, but so natural and facile a poetess, that she could compose extemporaneous verses so rapidly, as to make them keep pace and concord with the melody of her harp. Under the instructions of this poetic Sappho, the young Deidre imbibed the spirit of song, and attained the elegance of an enlarged and elevated education. The king, who constantly visited his little ward, was daily delighted to witness the germinating blossoms of her genius and beauty. When she had reached her tenth year, he introduced her to the Arch-Druid, who had pronounced the inauspicious prediction, and he was transported with admiration at the precocity of her talent, and at the perfection of her personal charms. He declared to the king, that she promised to be the most beautiful Queen, that ever graced the throne of Ulster. Within the gloomy cells of this prison-castle, the beauteous Deidre was confined until she reached her fifteenth year, when the king invited her and Leabharcham to court. Shortly after her arrival in the royal palace, she witnessed from the window of her apartment, the chivalric feats of the knights of the red-branch as they contended for the prizes before the king and nobles. In these contests, the skill and expertness with which one young knight, of the most prepossessing appearance, wielded his spear and pierced brazen shields, and unhorsed all his high-plumed adversaries, particularly arrested her attention, and awoke feelings in her heart, to which it was before a stranger. This young and gallant knight, was Naisi, the nephew of the monarch. She concealed from her nurse for that evening, the passion with which the manly form, and warlike exploits of Naisi inspired her bosom, where his image was already enthroned too firmly, to be supplanted even by a kingly rival. Soon after the feat of tournament, she happened to see from her window, a man, on a snowy day, killing a calf in the court yard, and as he removed the carcass, a raven came to feed upon the blood. "Behold!" exclaimed she, as she directed the Governess's eye to the scene, "the emblems of the young knight, who bravely conquered all his antagonists, in the exploits of the chivalry yesterday;—his manly person is adorned by the three colours we now see; for his skin is as white as the snow, his hair is glossy with the shining black that enamels the raven's wing, and his fresh blooming cheeks, are more red than the calf's blood that crimson the snow. O, tell me his name, kind benevolent nurse! and gratify thy Deidre, for I long to hear it expressed."

The nurse gave her every information that she required, and after a few entreaties she consented to bring Naisi privately into the castle; for she regarded Deidre with the most fond and tender affection. Naisi was transported with joy when he became acquainted with Deidre's passion for him, and consequently, he lost no time in devising means to steal into the forbidden castle. The first glance of Deidre's winning charms, made a captive of his affections, and the first words uttered by his tongue, were eloquently expressive of the ardour of his unalterable attachment, and solemnly asseverative of his inalienable constancy. The reciprocation of assurances of love, and the interchange of vows of eternal fidelity, rendered the moments that were occupied in this interview, the source of ecstatic rapture to the impassioned lovers; so that it was with difficulty, the Governess could tear Naisi from the arms of the fond and adoring Deidre.

Prior to his departure, however, he arranged the plan of elopement with his beloved fair. Gold and jewels bribed the fidelity of the Governess, so that the feat of carrying off the lady promised such little danger, that the genius of chivalry would blush, were she to emblazon the deed on her records. When Naisi at midnight returned to his residence, he despatched a faithful Herald* to Armagh, to his

* The Irish Heralds held a high rank in Milesian chivalry; they proclaimed war, and challenged rival knights to the combat. Every knight of the red-branch had his Herald. The ancient Irish held the character of the Heralds, as sacred and inviolable as that of their Bards; so that they could enter like the Minstrel, without danger, the castle of the enemy, or the ranks of opposing armies. Ware and Archdall, maintain that the origin of the Heraldic office in Ireland, is to be traced to the institutions of *Ollamh Fodhla*; but we have already adduced evidence, in our history, that Heber and Heremon, introduced Heraldry in Ireland; yet we are ready to admit, that the glorious era, of the reign of our great legislator, is the date of the Heraldic institution, in the form of a College at Tara. Their duties were to paint the armorial devices of each chief on his shield and banner, to arrange the order of precedence at the National assembly, and royal banquets; to proclaim the laws, denounce traitors, and summon the tributary kings and princes to the presence of the monarch.

By the ancient medals, which have been dug up in several parts of Ireland, and that are now in the Museum of the Dublin Society, it appears that the Herald was arrayed like the Bard in a long flowing tunic, and that he bore in his hand, a white wand, surmounted with the golden head of a serpent. Vallancey and other antiquarians conjecture, that these medals were struck long before the introduction of Christianity into Ireland. Harris advances strong and cogent arguments to prove, that the French borrowed their ideas of Heraldry from the Irish. "As," says this learned antiquarian, "the French had no regular body of men, charged with the care of armories, processions and ceremonies, until A. D. 1031, when we find mention in their chronicles, of Robert Daupin, as their first king at arms. In England, it does not appear that any such officer as the Herald, was ever employed on missions by William the Conqueror, or either of his sons; and it was half a century after the invasion of Ireland, that the office was introduced among the English warriors, who, no doubt, took their original idea of it from the Irish Princes."

In the reign of Brian the Great, our annals tell us, that his Heralds were invested with the highest privileges of the order; they were allowed free entrance into the palaces of the provincial kings, and the fortified castles of the chieftains; they reproved king Malachy, for his defection in the midst of his household troops; they summoned O'Neil, to make homage to Brian as monarch of Ireland, they adjusted the tournaments, and laid out the lists for the knightly combatants, who contested for the prizes of chivalry, on the celebration of Brian's accession to the throne. On the day of battle, they generally retired to an eminence, where they

brothers, Arden and Ainli, with a letter apprising them of his passion, and his determination of eloping with Connor's beautiful captive to Albania, and soliciting them to accompany him in his flight, with a chosen band of armed followers. The brothers, though they regarded the enterprise as one of extreme hazard and rashness, still loved their brother so affectionately, that they generously resolved to co-operate in the romantic adventure. The night fixed on for the deliverance of the damsel, was that which the king had appropriated for giving a feast to his nobles. Naisi was one of the guests, and he remained at the banquet table until near midnight, when wine and mirth so engaged the attention of the revellers, that he easily retired from them unperceived. Upon entering the castle, he was rejoiced to find his dear Deidre, and her nurse, ready for flight. They hastily issued from the castle, and mounting fleet coursers, they succeeded in reaching Donaghadee,* as soon as the first ray of the dawn glanced on the summit of the mountain.

On approaching the harbour they were gladdened by beholding Ainli and Arden, at the head of one hundred and fifty resolute soldiers, ready to receive them.

They hurried on board of the vessels that were prepared to transport them to Albania. After landing, they set out for the royal residence, where the king gave them a reception that was cordial and friendly, and quite worthy of the rank of his guests. When Deidre appeared at the banquet, her extraordinary beauty conveyed the flame of admiration to the bosoms of the men, and the devouring fire of envy to those of the women. She shone on this occasion, the magnetic luminary of the circle;—attracting every eye, and agitating every heart by her charms. The king was so deeply enamoured of her captivating loveliness, that he could scarcely refrain from uncourtly rudeness, even at the banquet. Influenced by his ardent passion, he resolved to do every thing to seduce the lovely Irish lady, from the bosom of her husband. But the first billet-deux that Deidre received from him, she, with commendable prudence, showed to her lord, who felt so indignant at the insult, that he challenged the king to a single combat, after reproaching him with his breach of the laws of decorum and hospitality. This challenge the monarch did not think proper to accept. Naisi being too proud to brook the insult, came to the determination of removing to the Isle of *Mona*, or Man, as he could not think of remaining in the territories of a sensual Prince, who sought to dishonour his bed. But he and his followers had not proceeded far on their march, when they were overtaken by the king's troops, on whom the Irish turned, and after an obstinate contest, compelled the Albanians to

could witness the progress of the conflict, and distinctly mark the achievements of the valiant, in order that they might record them on the page of fame, and afterwards emblazon with another symbolic device of valour, the shields of the heroic brave.

* DONAGHADEE is a thriving and animated village, in the county of Down, situated on the sea coast, at the distance of 15 miles N. E. from Belfast. The mail packets, and several Steam-boats daily sail from this port, to port Patrick in Scotland, across a channel of seven leagues. There is a fine light-house for the direction of mariners at Donaghadee.

retreat in disorder with considerable loss. Naisi, in consequence of this formidable resistance, was not again assailed on his march to the coast. As soon as he arrived in the Isle of Man, he sent a Herald to his friends Cuchullin and Connall Carnach, demanding a supply of forces, to enable him to resist the aggressive attack which he dreaded from the Albanian king. On the receipt of Naisi's despatches, Cuchullin, Connall, and several others of the nobles of Ulster, waited on the king, and implored him to evince his usual magnanimity and clemency in pardoning Naisi, and recalling him home.

This intercession of the nobles, had the effect of extorting from Connor a reluctant concession. When Naisi learned that the king had granted permission for his return, he signified to his friends, that it would be necessary in order to attest Connor's sincerity, whose vengeance he still feared, that three hostages should be given to him as a security for his, and his followers' safety.

No sooner was this request of Naisi communicated to Connor, than he manifested an affected willingness to accede to it ; as all he wished for was to allure Naisi to his palace, in order that he might let loose upon him, the furies of vengeance and jealousy. He, therefore sent, as we before related, his heir apparent, Fergus, and his natural son, *Cormoc Conloingios*, as the guaranties of his faith and honour.

As exile was become painful to Naisi, he was delighted, when those distinguished hostages arrived, with whom he joyfully returned to his own native land. Connor, meanwhile had spies, watching their arrival on the coast, and as soon as he understood that they had landed, he sent his principal commander, Eogan, at the head of a select body of troops, with secret orders to fall upon Naisi, his two brothers and followers, and put them without mercy to the sword.

Fergus having accepted the proffered hospitality, of the high chamberlain of Connor, who had a villa on the coast of Ulster, remained behind, but Naisi, and his party, as well as Fergus's three sons, *Fiachadh*, *Illan* and *Buini*, continued their journey, until they came to a defile near Emania, where they perceived Eogan and his forces posted. This array at first, created a little alarm, in the mind of Naisi ; but when he perceived Eogan coming towards him, in the seeming attitude of friendship, his suspicions were instantly dissipated, and he rushed forward in full confidence to meet the General ; but no sooner had Naisi given him his hand, than the base and treacherous Eogan thrust his spear through his noble heart ; this was the signal for the assassin's soldiers to attack the rest of Naisi's band. The gallant Fiachadh enraged to desperation at the foul act, rushed on Eogan, and assailed him fiercely, but after a brave and desperate struggle, he fell mortally wounded. Arden and Ainli, met a similar fate from the swords of their numerous foes. Poor and hapless Deidre, who witnessed the tragic occurrence, was just in the act of unsheathing a sword to stab herself, when she was rudely seized by Eogan, and borne in a state of insanity to the court of Emania. So vindictive and ignoble was the jealousy of Connor, that he was so little minded as to load the fair and unhappy

maniac with vituperative reproaches. The moment Fergus heard of the atrocious and flagrant deed, he was seized with the feelings of indignation, and the desire of revenge. His uncle had sacrificed his honour, by causing the assassination of the sons of Usnach, for whose safety he was responsible. The vile treacherous act of Connor, roused the horror and resentment of the province, so that the moment Fergus raised the standard of revolt, the people flocked round it, impatient for revenge. A battle soon ensued in which Connor was decisively defeated, and his son, Maine, and 300 of his best soldiers were killed. The victorious army then entered the palace, which they plundered, after putting all the inmates, without distinction, to the sword. But Connor and his shattered army, in a day or two rallied from their position, in the mountains, and succeeded in compelling Fergus to retreat to Dundalk.

Fergus occupied an eminence adjoining Dundalk, now known by the name of Castletown,* where he made a stand, and risked a battle with the royal army of Ulster. In this sanguinary conflict, which was contested with consummate generalship, and heroic valour, the king's troops gained a signal, but a dear-bought victory. Fergus and the shattered remnant of his army, retreated or fled to Connaught.

The reader may conclude that Fergus experienced no difficulty in recruiting his army, or in negotiating a loan of money in Connaught, when the Queen was his devoted lover and fond paramour. His army, composed of the flower of the knights of Leinster and Connaught, swelled to a formidable number, that threatened ruin and subjugation to devoted Ulster. Eochaidh, the supreme monarch of Ireland, at the instance of the Queen of Connaught, denounced the flagitious conduct of Connor, in the National assembly, and recommended the estates to embody an army, that should aid Fergus to avenge the cruel murder of the sons of Usnach. The recommendation of the monarch was quickly acted upon; and a formidable column of troops, among whom were some of the most gallant knights of Ireland, speedily formed a junction with the forces of Fergus. The accession of such strength, rendered the army of Fergus powerful in the extreme, and removed every doubt that could be entertained of its competence to achieve the easy conquest of the Ultonians. The Queen, like a second Semiramis, accompanied Fergus on his march to Ulster.

"In the relation of this famous invasion," says O'Halloran, "yet preserved, called '*Fainbho Cuailgne*,' or the spoils of the cattle at Cuailgne, in the county of Louth, we are entertained with the order of the march of the troops. They were led on by Fergus: the

* CASTLETOWN is situated about a mile west of Dundalk. The venerable castle, which was built in the twelfth century, crowns the summit of a green hill, from which a fine prospect of the bay of Dundalk and the mountains of Carlingford and *Slievegullion*, can be enjoyed. The castle is in excellent repair, and inhabited by a gentleman's family. The Rath or Mound, which elevates its verdant crest on the castle-hill, is a majestic pile of earth. In the adjoining valley, there is an abbey in ruins, which is now used as a Cemetery, and several of the Dundalk families have tombs in it. This abbey inurns the dust of Prince Edward Bruce, of Scotland.

Queen of Connaught, seated in an open chariot of splendid workmanship, with her asion, or crown of gold on her head, followed; her maids of honour, and retinue were placed in four chariots which were so disposed at the sides and rear, that the dust and foam of the cavalry should not stain her royal robes." As soon as Connor heard of the advance of so formidable an expedition, he made every preparation to resist the invaders. Almost all the male population of Ulster, rose in arms to oppose the approaching foe. The king, well aware of the popularity of the champion Cuchullin, the chief knight of the red-branch heroes, prevailed upon him to take the supreme command of his forces. Meanwhile, the wailing and broken hearted Deidre, remained confined in an apartment of the palace. When the king entered this chamber, shortly after the death of her beloved Naisi, he found her the living personification of inconsolable sorrow. She never raised up her head on his entrance, or spoke a single word to his questions. The stubborn and callous heart of the tyrant, was touched with a sense of relenting compassion, on witnessing the ravages which grief and distraction made in that countenance, which so lately bore the beautiful expression of an angelic face.

Sickness and sadness reduced her elegant form, to that of a withered sibyl; as the enchanting beauty, that lately inflamed so many hearts with the passion of love, was now sunk in wrinkles, like a broken statue mouldering in the dust and ashes of its own ruin.

The next time Connor came to visit the melancholy Deidre, he brought Eogan, who assassinated Naisi, with him to behold the ill-fated woman in decay. Connor pointing his finger in a most insulting manner at her, said to Eogan, "I make you a present, General, of this false and scornful beauty, who has spurned the love of her sovereign, and afflicted her country with such calamitous misfortunes. Take her home and use her as you please." Eogan's servants then seized Deidre and forced her into his chariot. The king, in whose malignant heart, the fires of revenge and jealousy, were not yet quenched, seated himself in the chariot with Deidre and Eogan, and on the journey to the castle of Eogan, he was so cruel and unmanly, as to insult the unfortunate victim of his persecution, with expressions that were grossly obscene, which so irritated and incensed her, that in order to escape such rude dishonour, and the disgrace of being the mistress of her husband's murderer, she precipitated herself out of the chariot, and was instantly killed on falling on the pavement.

Such was the fate of the hapless and lovely Deidre, whose peerless beauty, and poetic genius, are extolled by our poets and historians, in the loftiest hyperbole of eloquent panegyric.

Before the grand army of Connaught commenced its march for Ulster, the Queen, mounted, like an Omphale, on a spirited war-horse, rode into the midst of the ranks and harangued them with a force of eloquence that could not fail of elating their courage and ambition. She painted the oppressive acts of Connor, and his implacable enmity to Connaught, in the blackest colours of censure, and

took occasion to remind *Lugha*, the champion of Munster, that his father, *Conraoi*, was killed by Cuchullin, the Captain of the Ulster knights, and expressed to Mac Nead, the General of her uncle's army, her fears that the ambitious Connor aspired to the throne of the Irish Monarchy.

Her address was received with a burst of acclamation from the whole army. "Let your majesty lead us to the enemy's camp, that you may witness our valour," was the exclamation of every tongue.*

The march of these legions from Roscommon to Ardee, in the county of Louth, presented all the pomp and pageantry of a triumphal procession. The waving banners, the flowing plumage of golden helms, the gorgeous war chariots, drawn by stately steeds in spangled caparison, the mail and arms of officers and soldiers, and the beauty and elegance of the Queen and her ladies, all displayed a brilliant spectacle, as superb and imposing as the genius of Irish poetry could even imagine.

This invading army advanced to Ulster in two divisions. The first division consisted of the Connaught troops, and the army of Leinster commanded by Olioll, the Connacian king, Fergus, Prince Carbery, and Mac Nead: the second was composed of the *Clana Deaghadh*, or Munster militia, under the command of *Lugha* the son of *Conraoi*, and other chivalric captains.

CHAPTER XX.

Battle of Mullacrew, in the county of Louth.—Death of Cuchullin.—of Meibhe, Queen of Connaught and her lover, Fergus.—Battle of Roscommon, and death of the King of Connaught.—Combat and death of Ceat and Connal Cearnach, the rival champions.—Reign and death of Connor, King of Ulster, and of Eochaidh X. monarch of Ireland.—The reign and death of Eidersgeoill; and the accession of Nuadhneacht to the throne, and his death, in the fifth year of the Christian era.

The allied army encamped in Ardee, which was then called "*Baile na Riog*," or the town of the kings, which is still its Irish appellation. Here Fergus and the other chiefs wished to bring the Ultonians to battle, and, with this intent, they raised fortifications on the banks of the river Dee, a deep and rapid stream, that rises from a small lake in the county of Meath, five miles N. W. from Ardee, and after passing through that town and Dunleer, and receiving in its course, the waters of several tributary rivulets, falls

* "It must be confessed, that this was a period of great military renown in Irish history. For here were three principal tribes or order of knights at that time, who were not only accounted the greatest men of the age by their own provinces, but were so confessed by all the nations of the western world. We are told that their valour, their strength, and the largeness of their stature, were the wonder of the surrounding nations; and that their exploits are not to be paralleled in history.

It was one of the principal customs of the ancient Irish, to train up their youth to a military life; that they might either defend their country in time of distress, or carry the fame of their arms abroad."—WARNER.

into the sea at Annagassin, in the county of Louth, at the distance of fifteen miles from its original source. The Rath, or Mound, which the Connacians then erected adjoining Ardee, is one of the most majestic, elevated and extensive piles of earth and stone in Ireland.*

Connor, in the meantime, made a vigorous preparation to oppose the meditated attack of the approaching foe, and happily succeeded by his artifice and address, in appeasing the resentment of the hero, Cuchullin, and in persuading him to take the chief command of the Ultonian army, then encamped at Dundalk. The very name of this chief of the *Craob-rogh*, or the knights of the Red-wreath was a "tower of strength," to Connor's forces. Notwithstanding that Cuchullin could never forget nor forgive the baseness and cruelty of the king of Ulster to his relatives, he still was impelled to assume the command of the army, not only by the desire of glory, but by the craving of revenge; for in a former war between the Connacians and Ultonians, Lugh, the champion of Munster, had killed his father. The Ultonian general had strict orders to remain on the defensive at Dundelgan, Dundalk, until he should be reinforced by a legion, under Connal Cearnach, that was daily expected to return from an expedition to Britain. The Connacians, aware of their numerical superiority, did every thing which artifice could suggest to force Cuchullin to a battle. They abandoned their entrenched camp at Ardee, and took up a position on an eminence at *Muirthimhe* (Mullacrew†) four miles northward of their former camp, and in the

* This mound was called "Castle Guard" by the English invaders, who built a citadel on its summit, A. D. 1253, to defend the Castle and town of Ardee from the assault of the "Irish enemy." In building the lofty mound, in whose bosom, it is supposed, there is a concavity, which once served either for a Druid's cave, or a regal tomb for the Princes of Louth, (the O'Carrolls) several ponderous piers and massy arches of chiselled limestone, have been raised one above the other, from the foundation to the summit. The castles or citadels erected by the English on the top of this mound, of which there is now scarcely a vestige, were, according to Camden, Ware and Grose, "two concentrate octagonal buildings, the one a strong tower, the other a kind of breastwork by way of battlements, which were garrisoned by British soldiers, to protect the strong castle of Ardee, a fine edifice which was built by Sir Roger Pepper, A. D. 1267." The mound was, until 1819, encompassed with a double ditch and vallum, which, as a singularly mal apropos coincidence, was then levelled by the direction of Mr. Thomas Pepper, one of the remote descendants of Sir Roger, in order to make arable land of the site of the fosse. The circumference of the outward ditch was measured in 1819, by JAMES S. LAW, Esq. the talented author of the *IRISH CATHOLIC*, and the author of this history, by which we ascertained that it was 720 feet: by the same admeasurement, we found that the circuit of the mound at the base was 567, and the conic elevation from thence to the summit 98 feet; the breadth of the vallum 30, and the height of the ditch 40. The circumference at the top of this romantic mound, on which, in our schoolboy days, we often played the truant; and in those of the spring of our manhood and felicity, read and mused, and watched the setting sun descending from his sapphire throne to his ruby couch of clouds, is 142 feet. The views which open to the eye here, are as picturesque as beautiful. We hope it will not be considered a culpable piece of egotism for the author of this history to mention, that Ardee is his birth place, as well as that of his paternal ancestors since the twelfth century.

† Mullacrew is a large common, about five miles north of Ardee. From the days of St. Patrick to those of Henry VIII. the Prior of the abbey of Louth was the lord of its soil, who allowed the cattle of the poor to graze upon it; but on the suppression of the Irish monasteries, Henry made a grant of it to Sir Oliver

immediate vicinity of *Caislean na Calga*, or Calga Castle, the patrimonial residence of the Ultonian general. This movement compelled Cuchullin to extend the right wing of his army to a height now called Ard Patrick, or the Hill of Patrick.* The two armies approximated so close, that it was impossible, in consequence, to avoid a battle. The Ultonian chief, however, notwithstanding his fiery valour and impetuous courage, wished to decline coming to action, until the arrival of his gallant colleague, Connal. But Fergus and Lugha caused trumpeters to approach Cuchullin's camp, in order to mock and deride him, and by this means provoke him to join battle with them. These insults had the desired effect; for they irritated the brave hero of Ulster, who, impatient to avenge them, issued the signal for the attack on the Connacian camp. At that moment, when his military passion reached the acme of enthusiasm, some of his officers endeavoured to persuade him to postpone the action for a day, he indignantly retorted, "What! are we to fear their superior numbers? No, their defeat will be more glorious to the Ulster arms. I to shrink like a dastard, from the face of the vaunting foe, O! never. Since my first arms were put into my hands, I have never declined a battle, nor shall I this. If I am to fall under the spear of Lugha, I shall fall like my heroic Sire, covered with a warrior's glory, and with a spotless fame, worthy of being embalmed in the song of Erin's Bards." The onset was as dreadful as it was desperate: resentment and implacable rage burned in every breast, and rendered the conflict of the belligerents sanguinary and fierce beyond any former example on record. Cuchullin's war chariot, like the red thunderbolt felling the trees of the forest, flew through an avenue studded by uplifted battle axes, and paved with dead bodies. To stop his fiery car of carnage, which rolled through the Connacians as irresistible as the headlong torrent of burning lava, when sweeping down the rocky declivities of *Ætna*, was an achievement that none except Lugha had the daring courage to attempt. The Munster champion bravely resolved to cross his blood-flowing

Plunkett, the first Baron of Louth, as well as of all the lands and possessions which then belonged to that rich priory. Lord Louth obtained a patent for holding a monthly fair here, for the sale of cattle, yarn, wool and coarse cloth. The quantity of wool exposed for sale at the great fair here, on the 17th of June, is immense. The tolls and customs are the property of the present Lord Louth, who farms them out at a large annual sum. It was at the fair of Mullacrew, in June, 1826, that RICHARD SHEIL, the Irish Cicero, harangued the Louth forty shilling freeholders, with a potency of eloquence which shivered from their minds the corroding chains of half a century of servility, and called forth from a torpor, congealed by the degrading dependence of sixty years, that glorious and regenerated spirit, which levelled the despotism of the *Fosters* and the *Jocelyns* in the dust, and gave a triumph to toleration and honest principle, in the election of the late ALEXANDER DAWSON, Esq.

* "He (St. Patrick,) journeyed from Connaught to Slane, thence to Ardee, and thence to Lugh, now called Louth, a place famous for abbeys and seven churches. It derived this name from Ludha O'Carroll, prince of Conal Muir-thimne, to whom St. Lupita, Patrick's companion, was sold as a slave. At Louth, St. Patrick intended to have established a Bishop's See, but he was diverted from his purpose by St. Mochthe, the first prior. He retired to a place called Ard Patrick, a few miles east of the town of Louth, which is renowned in our history for being the site of the great Cuchullin's camp, where he built a small church."

BOOK OF DONEGAL.

path, and arrest his destructive career, or nobly die in the glorious attempt. Our ancient historians compared the collision of the war cars of Lugha and Cuchullin, to that of two huge rocks of flame, thrown in contact by a violent volcanic concussion. The combatants fought with a force and a fury, which astounded the contending armies. It was a murderous conflict of two enraged giants, each of whom was at once fired with the desire of vengeance and glory. After fighting from noon to dusk with unexampled bravery and unshaken resolution, Lugha succeeded in piercing the heart of the Ultonian champion with his javelin. Thus fell the renowned champion of Ulster, a hero whose exploits have been the theme of countless songs and stories of Irish and Scottish writers.*

Moore, in his epitome of the history of Ireland, in alluding to Cuchullin, observes:—"In the commencement of the christian era, the name dwelt upon, with most interest, by the chroniclers, is that of the young hero Cuchullin, whose death, in the full flush and glory of his career, took place, according to these authorities (Keating, and O'Flaherty) in the second year of Christ. With the fame of this Irish warrior, modern readers have been made acquainted by that splendid tissue of fiction and forgery imposed upon the world as the poems of Ossian, where, in one of those flights of anachronism, not infrequent in that work, he is confronted with the Bard and hero *Oisín*, who did not flourish till the middle of the third century. The exploits of Cuchullin, Connal Cearnach, and other heroes of the red-branch, in the memorable seven years' war between Connaught and Ulster, are among those themes on which the old chroniclers and Bardic historians most delight to dwell. The circumstance recorded of the young Cuchullin by these annalists, that when only seven years old, he was invested with knighthood, might have been regarded as one of the marvels of traditionary story; had we not direct evidence, in a fact mentioned by Froissart, that so late as the time of that chronicler, the practice of knighting boys at the very same age, more especially those of royal parentage, was still retained in Ireland."

The result of this battle broke for the present the spirit of the Ultonians, who were obliged to retreat in great disorder to Armagh. The victorious allied army sacked the castle of Calga, and carried off immense spoils which they found in it, as well as in the town of Dundalk. After this victory, the king and queen of Connaught,

* "The relation of the death of Cuchullin, at the battle of Muirthimne, about twenty-five years before the birth of Christ, in the Book of Leinster, is full of animation and spirit; but while I cannot help admiring the richness of the language and the sublimity of the thought, I cannot help deprecating the folly, and censuring the credulity of Keating and O'Flaherty, who gravely tell us that it was by the power of Druidical enchantment Cuchullin was defeated, and not by the sword of Lugha."—LYNCH.

"In this battle we find war chariots were used, and numbers of them destroyed in the sanguinary conflict, which is as memorable for carnage as it is for the valour displayed by the armies of Ulster and Connaught."—O'HALLORAN.

"By the concurring testimony of all our annalists, Cuchullin was killed at this battle, twenty-five years before the incarnation, although Mr. M'Pherson, in defiance of chronological evidence, makes him contemporary with Ossian, who did not exist until the latter end of the third century."—FLANAGAN.

accompanied by Fergus, returned to their palace. Great festivities and rejoicings in celebration of their triumph, took place on their arrival at the Connacian court. At this juncture, the amours of the queen and prince Fergus, became so openly immodest and indecently notorious, that all the courtiers loudly censured them as disgraceful at once to morality and royalty. Olioll, the old king, had long cherished acrimonious feelings of jealousy and indignation in his bosom, whose vindictive impulse, at the instigation of some of the nobles, he determined to follow, as soon as an opportunity should present itself. The hour of vengeance soon arrived. Meibhe and her paramour were in the habit of bathing in a secret part of the lake, where the banks were shaded with the thick foliage of willows and laburnums, which formed a sylvan arbour, from which Flora herself would love to leap into the limpid water, with the gallant Zephyrus. The king, with a trust-worthy nobleman, concealed himself in the labyrinths that adorned the banks of this lake, until Fergus plunged into the deep, when the provoked prince darted a javelin at him with such an accuracy of aim, and violence of force, that it transfixed Fergus' body. The brave but unfortunate prince, though mortally wounded, swam to the bank, and twisting the barbed steel out of his entrails, he flung it with all his might at the monarch, whom it missed, though it was so dexterously directed, that it killed the grey hound which stood at his feet. In a few moments afterwards Fergus died, and his body was honourably interred with all the funeral pomp and sepulchral distinction due to his eminent rank as a prince of the blood royal of Ulster, and a chieftain knight of the illustrious order of the Red Branch. Connor, far from being intimidated or dispirited by the disasters that attended his army, on the contrary, was stimulated by reverses to make greater efforts to command success. He employed himself in the most sedulous endeavours to recruit his army, and inflame the pride and fan the resentment of the Ultonians. While in pursuit of this object, the intelligence of the treacherous death of Fergus arrived, which served as an electric spark to set the vengeance of the people in a blaze. The apathy in which the public feeling was before congealed, now instantly, on the promulgation of the death of a prince, whose popularity was unbounded, became thawed, and the blood of every heart boiled in the vehement effervescence of vindictive resentment.

The whole population of Ulster, glowing with indignation took up arms, and flew en masse to the royal standard. At the moment that this intense enthusiasm pervaded every bosom, and united every opinion in a community of purpose, Connal Cearnach returned from an expedition in Britain, flushed with victory and laden with the spoils and trophies of conquest. When the victor heard of the fate of his attached friend and cousin, Fergus, he swore by his knighthood that he would offer a holocaust of Connacians to his manes. The very name of Connal was, like that of Napoleon, "a host in itself," a tower of strength, whom the Ultonians regarded as invincible, and whose heroic exploits and renowned deeds of arms in Britain, Albania and Gaul, acquired for him the reputation of being the most valiant champion in Europe.

Connor, who resolved to lead the invading army to Connaught in person, appointed Connal Cearnach his second in command. Under such leaders as these, an army so animated as the Ultonians then were, could not for a moment doubt the success with which a victory over their enemies must eventually crown their arms. Inspired with these encouraging hopes, the troops commenced their march, in two divisions, for Dundalk, the head quarters of the Connacians; the first division was led on by the king, the second by Connal Cearnach.

When Ceat the commander of the Connacians, was apprised of the approach of such a numerous army, he broke up his encampment at Dundalk and Ardee, and precipitately retreated to Roscommon, where he expected to receive a reinforcement that would enable him to make a stand against the enemy. The Ultonians pursued him by forced marches. As Ceat had expected, the king of Connaught, Olioll More, formed a junction with him on his arrival at Roscommon, where they entrenched their united forces in a strong position, and resolved to await the attack of the Ultonians. They had scarcely formed their lines, when the king of Ulster drew up his army in order of battle before them, and despatched heralds to their camp to challenge them to the conflict, which it was now impossible to evade. The signal was quickly given for the onset, and both armies rushed upon each other with an implacable fury, and a direful thirst of vengeance, that could only be satiated by death. The sanguinary contest was maintained with a bravery and intrepidity that long trembled on the equilibrate of victory; when, at length, Connal Cearnach, at the head of the knights of the Red Branch, charged the centre of the Connacian army, under their king, with irresistible valour, and succeeded in breaking their line, and in killing Olioll and all his guards; while Connor overthrew their left wing, which he drove in confusion from its strong position. Ceat, on this occasion, evinced his accustomed spirit and gallantry; but finding that all his efforts could not make his panic struck troops rally, he felt himself, in consequence, constrained to make a rapid retreat to the borders of Lough Conn, in the county of Mayo, whither he was speedily pursued by the victorious Ultonians.

The flight of the Connacians from Roscommon* to Lough Conn,† was in all the consternation and confusion of a discomfited army. But when they reached the foot of Nephin mountain, whose summit overlooks the lake, Ceat concentrated them in one of its defiles, where he justly calculated he could advantageously resist the attack of his pursuers. When Connor arrived on the banks of the lake, he

* Roscommon is a very ancient town, the capital of the county of that name. It is situated in the bosom of a picturesque valley, at the distance of eighty miles N. W. from Dublin. Of its monastic ruins, feudal castles, and the beautiful landscape scenery that environs it, we shall give a description in our topography of the county of Roscommon.

† Lough Conn is a large lake in the county of Mayo, which is ten miles long and six broad. Its lucid waves are dotted with beautiful green islands, and bordered with shrubby banks, decked by the hand of Flora. The lofty mountain of Nephin raises its gigantic crest above this lake, over which it casts the gloom of its shade. A fine species of trout, called *gillanoo*, considered the best in Ireland, abounds in Lough Conn.

was greatly disappointed to find the foe occupying a position guarded by a pass and secured by mountain acclivities, out of which he foresaw it would be impossible to dislodge them. The Ultonian king pitched his tents as near as possible to Ceat's lines, in the hope that he might by some means or other induce him to hazard another battle, from which he confidently anticipated decisive results, that would end the campaign, and reduce and humble Connaught to his subjection. Bands of the Ultonian archers and slingers were constantly assailing the Connacian position; but Ceat, to render such a mode of assault harmless, soon raised a breastwork which effectually protected his troops from this annoyance. Thus Ceat, with the consummate prudence of a wise and steady general, cautiously declined coming to an engagement with superior numbers, notwithstanding that Connor, with a view of forcing him out, frequently and repeatedly, through his heralds, jeered, taunted, and even reproached him with being a coward.

Ceat, conscious of his inability to compete with Connor, in fair battle, endeavoured to effect by stratagem, what he could not accomplish by arms. During several days on which the hostile armies were in sight of each other, the principal ladies of Mayo generally ascended the acclivities of the mountain, in order to view the martial array of hostile legions, in the valley. The king of Ulster, who although then sixty years of age, evinced as warm a passion for amorous pleasures as ever, was in the constant habit of approaching quite near the station which these ladies occupied, in order to gaze upon their charms and converse with them. On one of these occasions, a youthful maiden of extraordinary beauty, allured the king to the mountain, where she promised to grant him the last favour. The monarch, panting with the hope of expected bliss, and not dreaming of the treachery which was planned by his enemy, gladly repaired to the spot of assignation, which he had no sooner reached, than to his confusion, but not terror, he found, not a blushing nymph, but his implacable enemy, Ceat, armed with a spear and *cran tubal*, or sling, to receive him. Connor, seeing the danger that environed him, and being unarmed, began to retreat from his dishonourable foe, but ere he went many paces, Ceat darted a ball at him from his sling, which struck and fractured his skull. Notwithstanding the severity of his wound, Connor succeeded in escaping to one of the outposts of his own troops. When the royal surgeon, *Fignin Feasac*, or the skilful, examined the fearful contusion made by the ball, on the king's head, he told his majesty that by the operation of the trepan alone, he could save his life. The king willingly submitted to the painful operation, which the surgeon performed with such unexampled skill and care, that the wound was cured in a short time.* The surgeon then assured the king, that as the wound had injured his brain, he felt it his duty to warn his majesty never to get into a heat of passion, as under such an excitement of feeling, it would

* "From this circumstance, the use of the trepan or trephine, was introduced, in the most early ages, in Irish surgery."—WARNER.

"This is only one testimony, among the many which the Irish annals furnish, of the professional eminence of the ancient physicians of Ireland."—RAYMOND.

probably break out again, and produce consequences which might prove fatal to his life. When he was thus in a state of convalescence, he received with joy, overtures of peace from the monarch of Ireland, Eochaidh X., who signified, through his ambassadors, his intention of withdrawing his assistance from the Connaught Confederacy. As soon as the wishes of the monarch were intimated to Connor, he sent an embassy to Tara, to solicit the hand of the Princess *Eithne* in marriage. This solicitation was promptly complied with, and the Princess, without delay, accompanied Connor's ambassadors to her intended spouse's head quarters. Among these ambassadors, was Connor's poet laureate, who in mind and person united the attributes of Apollo to the prepossessing graces of Adonis. On the journey, the incense of adulation was never quenched in the censer of his poetic encomium; the beauty and accomplishments of the young queen were the subjects of all his odes and songs. She read and listened to those effusions, with pleasure, and conceived at the same time, a tender attachment for the young bard. Shortly after the marriage of Connor with this lady had been celebrated, the poet and the Queen were surprised one evening, in a dark labyrinth, near the royal tent, in a very suspicious situation. This discovery was soon communicated to the jealous king, who became so enraged, when he heard the particulars, that he ordered the luckless bard to be drowned in Lake Conn, immediately adjacent to the house of *Laoghaire Buadhaig*, a powerful chief, and one of Connor's allies. The underlings of Connor quickly seized the devoted bard, and putting him in massy chains of iron, instead of crowning him with laurels and roses, dragged him to the margin of the lake, where they were about throwing him in headlong, when one of Laoghaire's shepherds came up to the executioners, and told them that a poet should not die so near his master's house. At this juncture, Laoghaire himself, heard the loud clamour of their debates, and suddenly starting up, rushed towards the expostulating parties, and, while generously rescuing the Parnassian victim, he received a wound from a spear, which proved mortal; but his last moments were cheered and illuminated by the satisfaction, that arose in his mind, from his having snatched the votary of the Muses from a watery grave. Of the ultimate fate of the minstrel, our annals tell us nothing.

About this period, queen Meibhe, whose grief for the death of her lover, Fergus, was deep and inconsolable, retired from the seat of war, to a country palace, in the County of Galway, situated on the borders of Loch Ribh, where she wished to indulge, during the remainder of her life, in the luxury of sorrow, without molestation or annoyance. It was her custom, after coming here, to bathe in the lake every morning; which circumstance coming to the ears of one of Connor's illegitimate sons, *Forbuike*, he formed the unmanly resolution of taking away her life. To effect this infamous purpose, he watched the Queen, and when she was in the water, he darted from his sling, a ball, with such power and direction, at the helpless woman, that she was instantly killed.

"In this manner," observes Keating, "fell this heroic Queen, after she had enjoyed the government of Connaught ninety years."

Ceat, at this time, in single combat, having overthrown three of the bravest champions of Ulster, sent a herald to Connal Cearnach, to challenge him to a personal conflict, which was instantly accepted. For two days, we are told, the contest between these chivalrous heroes lasted, of which, both the armies of Connaught and Ulster were spectators. Although Ceat was slain first, he sold his life at the dear price of his rival's, for Connal lost so much blood in the fierce and desperate struggle, that he fell down exhausted, in a swoon upon the body of Ceat. The gigantic exploits, and heroic deeds, which our bards attribute to Connal Cearnach, might embellish the most extravagant of poetic tales; but they have too much of the air of romance and improbability to impose on the incredulity of stern history. We therefore omit as O'Halloran and McDermott have done, several of Dr. Keating's legendary relations of this champion of Ulster. Shortly after the death of the Queen of Connaught, the mediation of the monarch of Ireland proved so fortunate as to effect a peace between the provinces of Ulster and Connaught. As soon as the peace was definitely ratified, Connor returned to the palace of Emania, loaded with spoils and elated with the glory which his exploits blew in the trumpet of martial fame over Europe. This prince, the son of Cais, who was lineally descended from the house of Ir, was as remarkable for great vices, as Ir was for great virtues. His flagitious and barbarous cruelties to the sons of Usnach, must ever fasten indelible infamy on his memory. To palliate, however, in some degree, the atrocity of his conduct, it must be admitted, in its extenuation, that he was valiant in battle, and wise in council; and his memorable protection of the bards who were banished by order of the Brehons, at this era, from the kingdoms of Munster, Leinster, and Meath, furnishes an honourable testimony of his munificence, and of his love of literature and the arts.*

* "Connor, King of Ulster, opened an asylum at his palace in Emania, for the banished minstrels."—BOOK OF THE FOUR MASTERS.

"In the reign of Connor, King of Ulster, the whole nation raised objections and clamours, against the insolence of the bards, who fiercely abused every one that incurred their displeasure; consequently, their charter was cancelled in Tara, and Ferns, and more than 1000 poets, took refuge at the palace of Ulster."—BISHOP HUTCHINSON'S VIND.

"Connor was a great protector of the arts and sciences, to him we are in a great measure indebted, for what records and history we possess, of these remote days. For the pride and power of the bards, and of the literati, had at this time risen to so high a pitch of arrogance and impertinence, that scarce any thing they demanded durst be refused to them. They grossly abused their privileges, and trampled the immunities of their compeers under their feet, and, with unsparing severity, libelled and satirized every person who was so unfortunate as to fall under their resentment, so that their aggressions became insupportable, and the monarch of Ireland, in consequence, felt himself constrained to procure a decree from the national estates, for their expulsion."—STRICTURES ON IRISH BARDIC HISTORY.

"Connor, who entertained the proscribed poets, to the amount of one thousand, in a remonstrance which he transmitted to the cabinet of Tara, clearly demonstrated that the total abolition of the *literary orders*, would be, to the last degree, detrimental to the state; but that a proper restraint of censorship, laid on them, would be a most useful and necessary step."—O'HALLORAN.

"It was through the interposition of Connor Mac Nessa, King of Ulster, that the order of the bards was put under legal restriction, as new law-tables were then published, and every poet, in some degree, made a judge of what he owed to the public, as a fellow subject, and to himself as an individual."—O'CONNOR.

"The father of Connor, was *Fachtna Fathaach*, the son of *Caes*, son of Rugh-

“From what has been said of the high station and dignities assigned to their bards and antiquarians, it will have been seen that in the political system of the ancient Irish, the literary or Bardic order, which appears to have been distinct from the Druidical, formed one of the most active and powerful springs. Supported by lands set aside for their use, and surrounded by privileges and immunities which even in the midst of civil commotion, rendered their persons and property sacred, they were looked up to not only as guardians of their country’s history and literature, but as interpreters and dispensers of its laws. Thus endowed and privileged, this class of the community came at length to possess such inordinate power, and by a natural consequence, so much to abuse it, that a popular reaction against their encroachments was the result, and their whole order was about to be expelled from the kingdom. In this crisis of their fate, the Conquovar, or Connor, King of Ulster, espoused the cause of the Bards, and, protesting strongly against the policy of suppressing them altogether, succeeded in effecting such reformation, in the constitution of their order, more especially in all that related to their judicial proceedings, as at length restored them to public favour. The better to regulate their decisions for the future, he caused a digest of the ancient laws to be formed, under the auspices of Forchern, and two other distinguished poets; and the code thus compiled, was called by their admiring contemporaries, *Breathe Neimidh*, or celestial judgments. In having Poets thus for their law givers; the Irish but followed the example of most of the ancient nations; among whom, in the infancy of legislation, the laws were promulgated always in verse, and often publicly sung; and even so late as the time of Strabo, the chief Magistrate of the people of Mazaca, in Cappadocia, (who was to them what jurisconsults were to the Romans) bore the title, as we are informed by Strabo, of the Law-Giver.”—MOORE.

His ambition was daring, insatiable, and inordinate, and his passions were as warm as they were often violent and licentious, for he was indifferent and regardless whether their gratification transgressed the rules of justice, or subverted the barriers of morali-

ruidhe, a descendant from the royal line of IR, from whom Ireland derives its name. His mother was Nessa, the daughter of Eochaidh IX. monarch of Ireland, and step sister to *Meibhe Cruachna*, Queen of Connaught. Though this famous Queen was his aunt, he yet carried on a long and bloody war with her, and in her old age, one of his sons, swayed by the desire of revenge, killed her while she was bathing in a lake, in Connaught.

One of the daughters of King Connor was married to *Carbre Niadfar*, King of Leinster, who, to obtain her, made over part of his own dominions to her father; so that in after ages, the O’Neils, as kings of Ulster, claimed a great part of Leinster, particularly the whole County of Louth, and all the districts of Meath, east of Tara.”—MAURICE REGAN’S “ROYAL IRISH GENEALOGY.”

“A poet of great antiquity, in narrating the cession of territory made by the king of Leinster to Connor, in consequence of obtaining his beautiful daughter, *Feidhlin*, in marriage, observes—

“Connor enlarged the bounds of his command;—
And as a dowry for his daughter’s beauty,
Obtained most fruitful tracts of land, from Leinster,
And joined them to his own dominions.”—BRYAN O’CONNOR.

ty. Dr. Keating's relation of his death, is so singularly improbable, that we will transcribe it here. "The king strictly observed the directions of the surgeon; for the violence of heat or passion would force the wound open, and by that means bring his life into the utmost danger; and in this state, Connor continued for seven years, to the great joy of his subjects, till the Friday on which our blessed Saviour was crucified; and then the king being surprised at the dreadful and supernatural eclipse of the sun, and shocked at the horrid darkness and convulsion of nature, that followed the death of the Son of God, consulted with the Arch-Druid, to ascertain the occasion and design of that wonderful event. The Pagan prophet replied that the cause of those strange and violent alterations arose from a barbarous murder, that day committed by the wicked Jews, upon a most innocent and divine person, Jesus Christ, the son of the everlasting God. The king resented that inhuman act with such a gust of passion, that he cried out "if he were a spectator of the vile sacrifice, he would take ample vengeance on the murderous persecutors of a deified Messiah, who came on this earth as the vicerent of heaven." He immediately drew his sword, and in his wrath, went to an adjacent grove, and, in the fury of his rage, began to cut down the trees, protesting that if he, with his knights of the red branch, were in the country of the Jews, where the Son of God was executed, he would be revenged upon the murderers, whom he would chop to pieces, as he did the boughs of the trees, and by this violence and heat of his anger, his blood and spirits were disordered and fermented, which had the effect of bursting open his wound, through which his brains gushed, so that he died upon the spot."

Now this is certainly the invention of mere fiction, as Connor was dead, according to O'Flaherty, long before the birth of Christ; but all our annalists agree in asserting that there was a famous Druid and prophet, called *Bacrach*, who flourished in Leinster, at this epoch who predicted the birth and crucifixion of the Redeemer of mankind. "We are not to wonder," says Dr. Molloy, "that the God of the universe should vouchsafe to enlighten the mind of a Pagan with the light of inspiration, and lay open before him that volume of futurity, in which he might read of the events which were to occur in an approaching age. The truth and probability of this assumption are borne out in fuller strength of evidence and illustration, by the testimony which history adduces of the prediction of the Heathen prophetesses, the sybils, as well as of the augury which enabled other blind and idolatrous soothsayers, ignorant of the existence of the true God, to foretel the birth and passion of our Saviour."

Some of our historians, Keating and O'Flaherty, relate what we hope for the sake of humanity, is unfounded, that Connor, in addition to his other atrocious crimes, was guilty of the diabolical and execrable sin of incest. Eochaidh X. the monarch whose long reign of forty years was distinguished for mildness, justice and prudence, died at Tara, A. M. 3965, shortly after the dissolution of Connor, much lamented by the nation. In our Essay on Irish Sepulture, and monuments, which we will give in the next chapter, we shall

relate that it was this monarch of Ireland, *Eochaidh Adhnocht*,* who caused a law to be passed for regulating the obsequies and sepulture of the Irish, in consequence of which our annalists have given him the distinctive appellation of *Adhnocht*, an Irish epithet, that signifies burial.

There are critics, we are aware, who might, with a great show of reason, object to the minuteness with which, in the course of this history, we have explained and illustrated facts and circumstances, that to a superficial reader, may appear divested of material importance; but we, in our arrangement of incidents, and narration of facts, have endeavoured to profit by the advice which the philosophic historian, Hume, gives in one of his essays. "In reading history," says he, "trivial incidents, which show the manners of the age, are often more instructive, as well as entertaining, than the great transactions of wars, and negotiations, which are nearly similar in all periods, and in all countries of the world."

Eochaidh X. dying without male issue, the national estates elected, at Tara, Prince EIDERSGEOILL, the son of Eogan, king of Munster, monarch of Ireland, A. M. 3965. This prince was of the dynasty of Heremon, and his martial fame, and great literary attainments, contributed their aids to gain for him an election, which was warmly contested. He, before his accession to the throne, eminently signalized himself in the wars of the Connacians, with the Ultonians, against whom he cherished the most inveterate resentment, in consequence of their having expelled his ancestors from their throne, to make room for the Irian princes. He married the grand daughter (Effa) of his predecessor, Eochaidh, and by this princess, he became the father of Connaire, the Great, who makes such a shining figure in the Irish annals. Eidersgeoill was not long suffered to enjoy the regal power, for in the sixth year of his reign, he lost life and crown in a battle fought with his successor, Nuadh Neacht, A. M. 3971. NUADH was crowned on the stone of destiny, at Tara; but his reign scarcely attained its seventh year, when Connaire, the son of the late monarch, Eidersgeoill, wrested the sceptre from his grasp, and extinguished the lamp of his life, at the battle of Cliach, in Meath, A. C. 5.

CHAPTER XXI.

The ancient sepulture of the Irish.—The reign of Connaire the Great—His death.—Accession of Lughaidh to the throne.—The reigns of Connor and Criomthan.

The ancient mode of interment among the Irish, bore a strong resemblance to that of the Greeks, which furnishes another strong

* "It will be perceived, by all those acquainted with the Irish idiom, that our orthography of Irish words, differ materially from that of O'Halloran; but we spell them according to the authority of O'Reilly's classical and standard dictionary of the Irish language.

corroborating fact to sustain the authenticity of our true eastern origin. Embalming was never practised among our Pagan ancestors; for when a chieftain or warrior died, naturally, or in battle, the funeral pile was reared on a lofty eminence, in which the body was consumed; the ashes were carefully preserved, and placed in a golden, marble, or brazen urn,* which was interred in a superb tomb, over which the cairn, cromlech, or tumulus was reared, to immortalize the spot consecrated to the sepulture of the deceased.

About two centuries before the introduction of Christianity into the Island, the monarch *Eochaidh*, as related in our last chapter, who is distinguished in Irish history by the appellation of the *regulator of the grave*, promulgated a law of burial. "He ordained," says O'Halloran, "that the head should be placed to the west, the feet to the east, and a mound of earth, or mural tomb, placed over the whole." At this period, the Knights of the Red Branch were immured in a deep grave, whose bottom was paved with white marble; the sides were lined with brick and durable cement, and the surface was covered with a large marble flag, raised on low pillars, resembling the table of a Druidical altar: the margins of this flag were ornamented with sculptured figures, emblematic of the chivalrous actions of the deceased; while the inscription recorded, in heroic verse, his martial valour, exploits, and moral virtues. The elegance of the bas-reliefs, and cut letters, of some of these tombs which have been discovered in the royal cemeteries of Cong,† in the county of Mayo—of Lismore,‡ in the county of Waterford—of Bangor, in the county of Down, of *Cruachan*, in Roscommon, of Clonmacnois, in

* "It appears that the first and most ancient manner of burying their dead, was that of burning on the funeral pile. They also, like the Hebrews, piled great heaps of stones over the spot where the urn, containing the ashes of the dead, was deposited. Several golden urns have been found under these *cairns*, as they are called."—WARNER.

† "CONG ABBEY was founded by St. Fechan in the sixth century, on the ruins of the sepulchral fane that entombed the dust of several of the Pagan kings of Connaught. Roderick O'Connor, the last monarch of Ireland, was interred here, but no visible monument proclaims, in marble eloquence, the eulogium of his virtues, or points out his unknown grave. Lady Morgan, in her deservedly popular novel of O'DONNELL, says, "that the monastery of Cong, on the borders of Mayo and Galway, is a model of the finest ecclesiastical architecture in Ireland." Dr. Pococke, whose celebrated travels are known to every intelligent reader, observed in relation to this village of monastic ruins, and the monumental relics of the "wrecks of time,"—"There is a spot in Ireland, that comprises within its verge, more of the loftier features of picturesque beauty, than any one scenic combination I saw in the course of my oriental travels."

‡ LISMORE furnishes many relics of former glory for the reflection of the antiquary, who wishes to muse amid mouldering porticoes, ruined castles, and crumbling sepulchres. Here Caius Marius would find piles of national ruins as worthy of his philosophic reflections, as any he ever saw among the fallen fanes, and dilapidated monuments of Carthage. The town, which is a flourishing one, is agreeably situated on the river Blackwater, in the county of Waterford, at the distance of 138 miles from Dublin. Lismore was as noted for its druidical temples, and royal tombs, in the Pagan ages, as it has been in the early ages of Christianity, for its abbeys, castles, colleges, and royal sepulchres. In the seventh century, St. Carthagh erected a noble abbey and university here. In the middle ages, the fame of the college of Lismore attracted students from Greece, Rome, France, Germany, and England. The site of this town before the Christian era, was called in Irish, from the great number of its tombs, *Maig sgiath* or the chosen shade of the dead. In addition to its monastic and collegiate ruins, the traveller will also

King's County, of Ardfert, in Kerry, and of Kilgowan, in Kildare, demonstrates the perfection to which sculpture was carried by our progenitors, in these dark days of barbarism, when the chisel and the pencil were equally unknown to the naked Britons. The corpse of the knight was laid in the "narrow house" with his armour on, and his sword, spear, and target were placed by his side.* The name of the knight or warrior interred, was inscribed on the tablet in the hieroglyphic characters used by the druids, called the Ogham epitaph. Many of these sepulchral tablets, bearing the Druidical inscription, have been dug up, some years ago, in the county of Sligo.

Lady Morgan, our illustrious countrywoman, when on a visit at the house of that truly patriotic gentleman, Mr. O'Hara, of Nymphfield, in the county of Sligo, saw, in 1809, and admired an urn which was dug up in the glen of *Knockna-righ*, or the King's Hill, a part of his domain, where there is an immense pile of huge stones, called the Giant's Grave, raised in a curious manner on the tops of others, which stand perpendicularly, like the pillars of Stonehenge, in England, and serves as the sepulchral monument of Milesian warriors. "The urn," says her ladyship, "is composed of the finest clay,

perceive the remains of its seven churches. In the tenth century, the royal author of the Psalter of Cashel, King Cormac Mac Cuillenan, caused a superb mausoleum, finished in all the elegance of architectural and sculptural taste, to be erected here for the receptacle of his remains, after his dissolution; but of this monument there is not now even a vestige to be seen. Lismore, prior to the invasion of the English, was part of the principality of the O'Phealans, princes of the Deisies. The castle of Lismore was built by King John, A. D. 1185. It is boldly situated on the verge of a rocky hill, raising its gray turrets perpendicularly, to a considerable elevation above the river Blackwater. The avenue approaching its arched portal, is studded on either side by rows of majestic oaks, which were, it is said, planted by Sir Walter Raleigh, who purchased the manor of Lismore from Myler Magrath, then archbishop of Cashel, as well as prelate of this see. In 1189, the Irish, under M'Carthy More, king of Desmond, demolished this castle, and made captives of its English garrison. It was rebuilt in the reign of Henry VII. In a future chapter of this history we shall narrate the different sieges it sustained from the reign of Henry, to that of James II. This castle is famous for being the birth place of the renowned philosopher, Robert Boyle; whose father, the Earl of Cork, purchased it from the heirs of Sir Walter Raleigh, A. D. 1621. Lismore Castle now belongs to that liberal and enlightened nobleman, the Duke of Devonshire, whose father had it elegantly repaired and ornamented. Over the gateway leading to the entrance of the castle, are the arms of the Earl of Cork, in basso relievo; and opposite to this entrance is a fine Doric portico of marble, which was designed by Sir Inigo Jones for the Earl of Cork, in 1644. The noble bridge which the late Duke of Devonshire, at his own expense, built over the Blackwater, is an imposing structure; the span of the principal arch reaching the extremity of 112 feet. The see of Lismore was united to that of Waterford in 1363, seven hundred and thirty years after its foundation. The Duke of Devonshire is a munificent patron to this town, under whose encouraging auspices it has grown into consequence and respectability.

* "Under a cairn at Lismore, some workmen dug up in 1791, a brazen sword, quite free from rust, formed exactly like that which the venerable Vallancey describes as resembling the Carthaginian swords."—*Hist. of Waterford*.

"Part of a golden tiara was found about sixteen years ago, in the drained bed of Loughadian, near Pointzpass, in the county of Armagh, and is yet in the possession of William Fivey, Esq."—vide *Sturat's Armagh*.

"A brass hatchet, which the ancient Irish called *Tuach-snought*, and a small spear, or pike, the well known *Laincach* of the Milesian soldiers, were found in the old abbey of Innis Murray, in the county of Sligo."—*Lady Morgan*.

highly polished, elegantly formed, and exquisitely carved: it was nearly filled with ashes, and a kind of bituminous stuff, over which was placed a beautiful lozenge, of thin variegated marble, once, perhaps, marked with an inscription, now entirely defaced. The urn, most probably, contained the ashes of some Milesian prince, or sacred Druid, to whom, in days of Paganism, this privilege alone was accorded; for when the body of the warrior was consigned to the earth, his entire arms and coat of mail were buried with him: thus the ancient Irish, like the ancient Etruscans, used both modes of inhumation at the same time."

After the hero, Cuchullin, was mortally wounded, at the famous battle of *Muirthimne*, (now Mullacrew, in the county of Louth,) fought a century before the incarnation, he commanded his charioteer to drive quickly to *Dundalgan*, (Dundalk :) "there," said the dying champion, "let me die; and let the carraig, cairn, and the two tall stones,* cover the place of my rest, and proclaim to the brave of other days, that he who sleeps below was valiant among the champions of Erin. Lay my shield on my breast, my two spears by my left side, and my sword and bow by my right: as to my fame, the bards of my country will consecrate it in song, and my deeds shall be rolled down to posterity on the tide of *Banbha's* heroic story."†

There is scarcely a parish in Ireland without its *giant's grave*, its cairn, its cromlech, and sepulchral tumuli. The Pagan Irish supposed that the spirits of their departed heroes, and Druidical sages, resided in these tombs; so that they were uniformly regarded with reverential respect by the living. On the introduction of Christianity, the missionaries observing the superstitious attachment of the people, to these monuments, preached the sublime truths of the gospel in the fanes of the Druids, and raised their churches over the graves of royal heroes, gallant knights, and celebrated Druids, which had the effect of propitiating the prejudices of the people, and enlisting their passions under the banner of the cross. The first Christian edifices, erected in Ireland, were generally denominated, in consequence, *Cil*, or *Coil*, in the old Irish, from the Scythian *Kille*, or, rest of the dead. Hence every place of cemetery, where the gospel was first preached in Ireland, received the name of *Kille*, and consequently explains the reason why the denomination of so many towns in the kingdom begins with this appellation, as Kilkenny, Killarney, Killaloe, Kilrush, and Kilgowan. The large pillar stone of Kilgowan, which is standing on an elevated hill, near Kilcullin, in the county of Kildare, is a singular sepulchral monument. At a distance it looks like the statue of Fingal, in the attitude of planning an attack, with his Irish militia, on the Roman legions. It is ten feet above the ground, and four feet thick, sloping rather to a recumbent position; and on its south side is rudely engraven a cross, in *creux*.

* It was from the "*two tall monumental stones*," that were always raised over the tombs of our ancient chieftains, that Macpherson derived the idea of decorating the graves of his *Albanians* with "*two grey stones*," which he stole out of the quarries of the Irish bards.

† BANBHA was a name given to Ireland, in honour of one of the Belgian queens. Cuchullin's dying words we have translated from M'Cleary's Annals of Donegal.

The funeral processions of the old Irish were conducted with great pomp, order, and solemnity. The body was borne on a grand funeral car, richly ornamented with plumes, blazoned palls, and brilliant escutcheons, as well as armorial banners of heraldic splendour storied with the fame and actions of the deceased. This car was preceded by the Druids, robed in their sacerdotal vestments, and singing hymns; and followed by the relatives of both sexes, arrayed in deep mourning; after them came the bards, headed by the *Ard-file-laibreil*, or high laureate. When the procession reached the tomb, the coffin was lowered into the vault, and as soon as the Druids performed all the religious ceremonies prescribed by their ritual, the chief genealogical antiquarian, in a narrative poem, recited aloud the pedigree of the family up to Milesias: then the laureate, in a species of elegiac poetry, called *clointe*, or the lamentation, pronounced a glowing and enthusiastic encomium on the chivalry, magnanimity, hospitality, and martial exploits of his dead patron; this was succeeded by a plaintive chorus, breathed from the mournful melody of a hundred harps, attuned to the funeral song, which was succeeded by a wailing howl, whose tide of melancholy music was swollen to an ebb of the most touching and afflicting pathos. The casting of a stone, by every person in the assembled concourse, on the grave, finished the last sad honours of the obsequies; this pious act concluded the solemnity—pronounced the apotheosis, and raised the monument.

“Among all the arts,” says the learned Charles O’Connor, “which wind up the human passions, the legislators of this island found none more effectual than the united powers of verse and song. The mournful elegies sang at funerals by the bards, made such an impression on the hearers, as produced the effects intended; a reverence and imitation of virtue, or of what, in those ages of heathenism, was deemed virtue. This inveterate custom entered so deeply into the manners of the nation, as to outlive, in some degree, all revolutions.”

The practice of employing *weeping rhymesters*, at the funerals of the middle classes of the Irish, in some counties, is still prevalent. These sorrowing women, like the mourning Hebrew females mentioned by Jeremiah, follow the hearse, and in a kind of extemporaneous melancholy cry, in which they are accompanied by the plaintive chorus of several other women, who have sweet Irish voices, extol the goodness and nobleness, and lament the dissolution of the deceased, in affecting strains of pathetic wailing.*

* “The female chorus is continued to this day, at the funerals of farmers of the Milesian stock: the custom also exists in the Highlands of Scotland, but so remotely from the original institutions, so debased by extemporaneous composition, and so disagreeable from unequal tone, that no passion is excited.”—*Dissert. on Irish History*.

“A faint trait of Druidical superstition still lingers among the Irish peasantry. If a murder is committed in the open air, it is considered indispensable, in every pious person, who passes by, to throw a stone on the spot where the victim died, which, from a strict adhesion to this custom, presents a considerable pyramid of stones. These monuments are beautifully and expressively called in Irish, *Cloct-breegh*, or the stony heap of sorrow.”—*Stranger in Ireland*.

Not only the arms, but also the rings and amulets of the ancient Irish warriors were immured in the grave; for scarcely a year elapses that one of these talismanic amulets are not found. The Irish, no doubt, derived their superstitious belief in the power and efficacy of charms, from their eastern ancestors; as we learn from history, that the Egyptians, Jews, Arabians, and Persians, were much given to this species of supernatural protection. All the Roman ladies wore amulets of various figures, forms, and materials, according to the rank and state which they occupied in society.

“The Irish chieftains,” says Lady Morgan, in that truly elegant and national work, “*Patriotic Sketches*,” “disposed by the ardour of their imagination to every illusion of Druidical superstition, held the influential potency of charms in religious estimation. The warrior, or knight, never entered the field of battle without his ring or amulet; and on the fair bosoms of the noblest dames, sparkled the consecrated talisman.” A large amulet of gold, elegantly chased, and beaded with pearls, was found by the labourers of Mr. Faulkner, in 1803, while digging a trench in his domain, at Castle-town, in the county of Carlow. Each side of this antique exhibited a legendary motto, finely engraved, in Gothic letters of the tenth century.

In a dissertation on the ancient architecture of the Irish we will give a description of the cromlech, and other sepulchral monuments.

The victor CONNAIRE, surnamed by our annalists the Great, mounted the throne. The military fame which he won by his valour in many exploits, attracted general popularity and admiration. The only memorable circumstance of his reign, however, on record, is one; and to it he is probably indebted for the appellation of the Great, he caused a law to be enacted which invested the Irish bards with their primeval prerogatives. No sooner had this ordinance been promulgated, than the concert of a thousand harps swelled the tide of bardic adulation to a boundless ocean of eulogium; while the pens of poets, and the tongues of orators, delighted to praise and extol a prince who delivered the “sons of song” from the penal restraints which his predecessors had, as they conceived, unwarrantably imposed upon them. In the book of reigns, he is distinguished by the epithet of Connaire “*na sgiath*,” or of the Golden Shield, as, before his accession to the throne, he always bore a shield of this precious metal in battle.

In the first year of his reign, he invaded Munster, which he cruelly devastated with fire and sword, in revenge for the death of his father by *Nuadh Neacht*, a prince of that province, (as related in our last chapter.) After he had thus reduced the people of Munster to subjection, he imposed heavy contributions upon them, and compelled their princes to bind themselves by a special covenant to pay him and his successors the following annual tribute, viz. three hundred golden-hafted swords, three hundred cows, three hundred purple cloaks, three hundred war horses, three hundred wolf-dogs,* and

* The breed of the famous Irish wolf-dog is now nearly extinct in Ireland. A few years ago, the late HAMILTON ROWAN, Esq. possessed two beautiful dogs of the fleet race of Ossian's *Bran*. These Mr. Rowan himself assured us, nine years ago,

three hundred vessels of ale. He then, elated with success and ambition, turned his arms against Ulster, which he soon subjected to his despotic dominion; but during his absence in that province, the chieftains of Munster, made an incursion into Meath, and burned his palace at Kells. Provoked by this daring act of retaliation, the monarch again inflicted a severe chastisement on the people of Munster. The bards, no doubt for the reason already mentioned, extol Connaire for his clemency, justice, and valour, and represent the nation basking during his reign in the sunshine of prosperity.

Some of our historians relate that he invaded Britain, from whence as they assert, he carried home such trophies and spoils, that the annalists bestowed on him the distinctive nomenclature of "*Chonaire na creich is na Lann*," or Connaire of the tributes and swords. Dr. O'Halloran, in noticing this allegation, says, "It is highly probable, that a warlike and ambitious prince like Connaire could not behold with indifference the progress of the Roman arms in Britain; and with the means he possessed, that he could have remained an idle spectator of the conquests of an enemy of whom he was always very jealous."

Connaire enjoyed a prosperous reign of forty years; but at the expiration of that period, an army of malecontents, whom the monarch had previously exiled to Wales, invaded the kingdom, under the command of Haingteil, who had married, during his exile, a British princess, and succeeded in defeating this supreme prince, and depriving him of life, in the year of Christianity, 10.* O'Fla-

when we had the pleasure of an interview with him, were the last remains of the Milesian wolf-dogs, of whose strength and sagacity we will have to relate so much in our future history.

Cambrensis, in his topography of Ireland, says, "They have a species of dogs here remarkable for great strength, fine shape, and large size." We are told by Harris and Vallancey, that James I. A. D. 1615, so highly prized the Irish wolf-dogs, that he esteemed them a present worthy of the acceptance of monarchs, and that he sent a pair of them, by his ambassador, Sir Thomas Rowe, to the Great Mogul. "There is," says an ancient writer, "extant in the rolls office of Ireland, a privy seal from king Henry VIII. obtained at the suit of the Duke of Alberkryke, of Spain, (who was of the privy council of that monarch,) for the delivery of four Irish wolf-dogs to the Spanish Marquis Dessaraya, which shows the high value put by foreigners on such presents."

"We believe that there is not now a wolf-dog of the genuine breed in Ireland. Lord Sligo had two wolf-dogs, in 1783, at his seat at West Port, the last of their race."—*Vide Stuart's Armagh*.

In the notes appended to Lady Morgan's popular novel "*O'DONNELL*," the inquisitive reader will find further particulars of the descendants of "breeze-footed Bran."

We find in an old Irish manuscript in our possession a spirited description of Fingal's famous wolf-dog, of which the following is a literal translation:—"Swifter than the wintry tempest that rolls the waves of the Shannon over the adjacent meadows, was Bran in the chace of the wolf and the mouse-deer. He ascended the loftiest mountain like a hawk in pursuit of prey. He was the first in the chace, as his master, Finn, was in the strife of spears." This famous animal, which was so highly valued by Erin's stormy hero of battles, had yellow legs, black sides, white belly, speckled back and loins, and small ears of crimson red.

* "I find myself obliged to depart in this instance from O'Flaherty's chronology which I have adopted hitherto all along, as being the most accurate. The chronology of Archbishop Usher, which places the death of Connaire in the tenth year of the Christian era, is that which is laid down by learned writers as correct."—
WARNER.

herty, on the authority of the book of reigns, conjectures that this king's reign lasted seventy years; but we think, with Keating, and Lucius O'Kennedy, in his history of the house of Stuart, that he fell within the period we have stated. The conqueror Haingteil, however, did not like other victors, reap the harvest of triumph; for the national estates refused their sanction of his pretensions to the throne. Indeed, the popularity in which Connaire was held by the whole nation, raised a barrier of insurmountable prejudice against the invader.

An interregnum of five years, an instance without precedent in our annals, was the consequence. At length, however, the estates, in the convention of Tara, elected *Lughaidh Riabhdearg* monarch of Ireland. This prince was the son of *Fineamhnas*, of the house of Heremon. Shortly after his elevation to the throne, he married *Dearborguill*, the fair daughter of the king of Denmark. "He received," writes Keating, "the title of *Lughaidh Riabhdearg*, on account of two red circles, one of which encompassed his neck, the other surrounded his body." This monarch was so passionately fond of his wife, that on her death his affliction became so insupportable, that he put an end to his existence by the commission of suicide. In a lake in Connaught, called *Lugh Ribh*, there is an island, which was denominated *Innis Clothra*, in honour of the mother of Lughaidh, whose name was *Clothra*.

After the occurrence of this event, which was unexampled in Irish history, the national estates assembled at Tara, and elected CONNOR *Abra ruadh*, (so called from his red eye-brows,) supreme monarch. He was the son of *Feargus Fairghe*, king of Leinster, or Feargus of the Sea, an appellation given him on account of his great navy. Connor was the grandson of the monarch *Nuadh*, of the house of Heremon. His regal power was not afforded time to develope either virtues or vices, for he was vanquished and slain in battle, in the first year of his reign, by his successor CRIOMTHAN.

The victorious Criomthan was the son of the monarch Lughaidh. He is represented by our annalists to have been a prince of rare endowments, and of such invincible courage in martial exploits, as to obtain from his countrymen the honourable adjunctive name of *Adaoine*, which signifies, in Irish, the hero. Keating and O'Halloran concur in asserting that this monarch carried the terror of his arms from Britain to Gaul, and that he vanquished the Roman legions in several pitched battles. His romantic courage, according to these authorities, was seconded by a great military genius. The matured experience he had acquired in war, enabled him to introduce a new discipline among his troops, which rendered them the most formidable body that combated with the Romans at that period. Shortly after the victorious monarch had returned from his foreign conquest to Tara, he was thrown from his horse, while hunting in Meath, and killed in the vicinity of the palace, in the sixteenth year of his reign.

CHAPTER XXII.

The rise of the Attachotic war.—The usurpation of Cairbre.—Moran's disinterested conduct, and the accession of Fearaidach to the throne.—An account of Moran's famous collar.

THE attentive readers of this history are aware, that during the period intervening the landing of the Milesians, and the death of Criomthan, which comprises a term of thirteen hundred and five years, Ireland was successively governed by a race of kings lineally descended from the hero of Spain. But an unexpected revolution at this epoch subverted, for a time, the legitimate succession. The descendants of the Belgians, still cherishing the hope of recovering the regal authority from the posterity of the conquerors of their progenitors, fomented a conspiracy, which resulted in elevating Cairbre, a Belgian chieftain, to the Irish throne.

Cairbre possessed, we are told, shining abilities both as a warrior and a statesman, and by their efficient exertion he succeeded in winning over to his interest the discontented Damnonii, and in enlisting under his standard bands of Britons and Gauls. His plans were managed with consummate address and profound secrecy; and the period he selected for making a bold effort for the sovereignty was one that fairly promised success. Shortly after the funeral of the late lamented monarch, Criomthan, had been suitably solemnized, the national estates, and the princes and nobles of the kingdom assembled at Tara, for the purpose of electing a successor to the crown. The festal entertainments that usually took place on such occasions were observed now with as much pomp and parade as ever. For three days the rich banquet and the racy goblet ministered to the gratification of the assembled nobles and representatives. Convivial hilarity banished care and lulled suspicion, and in moments consecrated to mirth and revelry the existence of the conspiracy was not even dreamed of by the pretended omniscient druidical prophets. Cairbre, aware of the state of things in Tara, and that festive pleasures engrossed the whole attention of its inmates, conducted his troops by private pathways to an ambuscade in the forest adjoining the palace, where he watched a favorable opportunity to achieve his daring project. At a late hour of the night, when the Milesians were disordered and stultified with wine, Cairbre and his adherents rushed into the palace, and slaughtered all the assembled guests, in cold blood, without either mercy or distinction. The sanguinary Cairbre was then proclaimed king by his soldiery, who compelled the terrified arch-druid to inaugurate him with the accustomed solemnities, on the stone of destiny. From that throne, which he reared as it were in the midst of a charnel-house, he made strong professions of patriotism, and of his intention to govern the Irish nation in the spirit of justice and constitutional law.

For five years, the period of his reign, more no doubt from fear than inclination, he acted towards the nation with singular mildness and lenity. When he ascended a throne by a ladder of murder and

usurpation, like another Augustus Cæsar, he was abhorred by all classes of the people; but after he had attained the summit of his ambition, he divested himself of the feelings of the tyrant, and surrendered his heart and affections to the generous virtues of the patriotic and paternal king. His death was, therefore, universally deplored, as a national calamity. His obsequies were celebrated with unexampled pomp and pageantry.

The popularity of the father was too high in the estimation of the people, to encourage any rival to dispute the legitimacy of the son's claim to the Irish throne, though it had been seized by untitled usurpation. MORAN, the heir apparent, was consequently proclaimed monarch of Ireland, with the accustomed formalities. But as soon as a deputation of the national representatives waited upon prince Moran, to offer him the homage due to a sovereign, and felicitate him on his accession to the throne, they were amazed, when, on announcing the object of their visit to this prince, that he spurned their offer of allegiance with a magnanimous spirit of self-denial, and nobleness of heroism, for which the history of Ireland could furnish no parallel. While they were mute with astonishment at this signal display of virtue, he emphatically addressed them, as follows:—"Gentlemen," said he, "I never shall wear that crown to which I have no just right, except what I might assert from the violence and aggression that placed it on my father's brow. Do you conceive Moran so ignoble, as to accept the power which is based on such futile, nay, dishonourable claims? No, gentlemen, you wrong me, when you suppose that injustice should be the foundation of the structure of my personal aggrandizement. If my own honest merits cannot light a radiant torch of fame to point me out to the applause of posterity, let my deeds rest in the darkness of guiltless oblivion, rather than that inglorious ones should glare in the lurid rays shed from the sepulchral lamps which dimly burn in my father's tomb. That human exaltation which soars on the pinions of unfounded pretension, can never reach the lofty pinnacles of immortality's imperishable temple." He then eloquently conjured them to restore the illustrious line of Milesius to that regal power which they had wielded for so many centuries with such brilliant glory. The representatives, equally impressed with the heroism of his sacrifice, and the persuasive power of his eloquence, promised him that they would yield to his request, and recall prince FEARAIDACH, the son of the monarch Criomthan, who had escaped the massacre of Cairbre, to the throne of his ancestors.*

* "There is not in all history, as I remember, another instance of a revolution like this: brought about by the self-denial and strength of mind of a single man, called to the exercise of royal power through the wickedness and perfidy of his own father, divesting himself of it, and disarming a giddy multitude, in order to establish the public tranquillity, and set the lawful heir upon the throne."—WARNER.

We certainly believe that ancient history affords no precedent for such a noble and heroic sacrifice as Moran's, if we except the solitary instance which Plutarch adduces in the life of the famous Spartan law-giver Lycurgus. The Spartan prince, though called, by general consent, to the throne, on the death of his brother Polydectes, was no sooner apprised that his sister-in-law was pregnant, than he abdicated the regal sway, and assumed the regency of the state, which he resigned when his nephew Charilaus arrived at the age of maturity.—P.

"Moran, at this heathen period, exhibited a rare instance of virtuous forbearance,

When the Milesian prince, in consequence of this procedure, returned to Tara, he paid his first visit to MORAN, whom he warmly assured of the eternal gratitude with which his exalted disinterestedness had inspired his heart. The monarch, on the day of his coronation, in the great hall of the national convention, invested Moran with the two-fold offices of arch-druid, and chief justice of the realm; high posts, next in dignity, power, and honour, to the sovereignty itself. At the recommendation of the pontiff, a general act of amnesty and oblivion was passed, in order to exempt the followers of his father from all personal or amercive inflictions for past offences.

The king, by acting under the sage wisdom and equitable justice of Moran, in his government, became truly popular with his people, whose affections he thus secured. The abilities and prudence of the minister gave added lustre to the administration of the monarch, on whom the national voice, with one accord, bestowed the title of the "Most Just." To meliorate the condition of the people, reform obnoxious laws of the state, and give a spirit and impulse to national industry, became equally the favourite object of the king and his prime minister. From such a beneficial pursuit all the blessings that can contribute to the happiness of a country, flowed abundantly, in an inexhaustible stream. Moran's decisions in the courts of law, were so remarkable for their impartiality and fairness, that it became proverbial to say of an equitable award, "*It is as just as if it were settled by Moran.*" His reputation for candour and integrity was held in the highest reverence by the people; and such was the power of his virtues over their superstitious credulity, that they believed the *torque*, or chain of gold which he wore, as the badge of his office, had the extraordinary magic virtue of contracting round the neck of a false witness to such a degree of compression as would produce suffocation; while on the neck of the witness who declared the truth, it would expand and hang loosely. This fabled ordeal caused future justices, as we are informed, to decide with uprightness and equity, and witnesses to make averments of truth. The traditional memory of this celebrated chain is still so well preserved in the reverence of the peasantry, that we have ourselves frequently heard persons, while earnestly avowing their innocence of any accusation, or solemnly asseverating absolute truth, assert, "We could swear by Moran's chain for it." "The supposed virtue of this collar," writes O'Halloran, "was a wonderful preservative from perjury, and prevarication; for no witness would venture into a court to support a bad cause, as he apprehended the effects of it if placed round his neck. To swear by the collar of Moran, is still deemed a most solemn appeal."*

that proves how much an honest and elevated mind is always under the influence of conscientious and equitable motives."—*Transactions of the Dublin Gaelic Society.*

* "This collar often caused iniquitous judges to decree impartially. For the sake of humanity, we would have wished that Moran's chain had encompassed, during his judicial career, the late Lord Norbury's neck, and he would not, in that case, have doomed so many of his ill-fated countrymen to the tortures of a *hempen collar*."—*Illustrations of Irish History, Dublin, 1819.*

"If this collar was put about the neck of a wicked judge, who intended an unjust

Dr. O'Halloran's conjecture that *Fearaidach* fought against the Romans, in south Britain, as the ally of the celebrated king of Britain, Caractacus, is not sustained by that chain of contemporaneous historical evidence which should entitle it to credence.

After a reign which had been so prolific with beneficial results to Ireland, the good and peaceable *Fearaidach* died at Tara, in the twentieth year of his regal sway, sincerely lamented by the whole nation, A. D. 66.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The reign of Fiachadhfhion; the reign and death of Fiachadh.—The battle of the Grampian Hills.—The accession of Eim to the throne of Ireland; his death and the reign of his successor, Tuathal.—Reform in the Irish Constitution.—Eochaidh, by artifice, obtains two sister-Princesses in marriage.—The consequences which ensued.—Tribute imposed on Leinster.—Tuathal's exploits in Britain.—Remarks on the Boroimhe.—Death and character of Tuathal.

AFTER the death of the late Monarch, *Fearaidach*, the national representatives, elected *Fiachadhfhion* monarch, notwithstanding the high and more legitimate claims of Prince *Fiachadh*, the son and heir of the good *Fearaidach*. But intrigue then, no more than now, seldom estimated the candidates by the standard of superior virtue.

The successful Prince was the son of Daire, of the dynasty of Heremon. When he attained the summit of his ambition, he indulged to excess in all those licentious vices which tend to corrupt the heart, warp the understanding, and enervate the mental powers of Princes. As crafty ministers generally produce much evil under such weak and effeminate kings, the government of *Fiachadhfhion* soon became intolerably despotic; and the people being no longer able to endure its injustice and hardships, took up arms, in order to subvert it. The flame of disaffection spread itself in a full blaze over the nation, and the vowed vengeance which wrongs and persecutions sealed in every heart with the desire of gratification, contributed an accumulation of fuel to the devouring and raging elements of revolt. The united voice of the insurgents called upon Prince *Fiachadh* to place himself at their head, and lead them to victory and freedom. This offer was promptly accepted by the ambitious chieftain, and the insurgents rapidly marched towards Tara under his command. The king collected all the forces he could muster at so critical and unexpected an emergency, and marched to *Ratoath** in Meath,

or partial sentence, it would continue shrinking until it strangled him, or till he changed his sentence into a just one, when it would instantly dilate, and set him at liberty."—WARNER.

* RATOATH is a small village, situated in the bosom of a beautiful country, at the distance of thirteen miles from Dublin. From the summit of the Rath, or mound of this place, the view is extensive and beautiful. The Protestant Church is built on the ruins of the fine abbey which was founded here, A. D. 1013, by the McNallys, who were the lords of the soil until the arrival of the English.

where the invaders were encamped. The contending belligerents quickly came to a decisive battle, in which the monarch, after a brave struggle, was overthrown and slain, in the third year of his reign. The conqueror, like all his predecessors, found no further obstacles to oppose his accession to the throne. He entered Tara in triumph, where he was solemnly inaugurated by the Druids, A. D. 69. It was at this period, we are told by our annalists, that Agricola laid a great part of Britain waste by fire and sword. The harassed Britons, groaning under the weight of their chains, earnestly implored the Irish monarch to become their protector, and assist them with aid to shake off the Roman yoke. *Fiachadh*, no doubt, apprehensive that the warlike legions of Agricola might invade his own kingdom, quickly granted the required succours. An expedition, under the orders of his best general, *Cormac Gealta-Goath*, whom Tacitus distinguishes by the name of *Galgachus*, promptly sailed to Britain. As soon as the forces landed, the Irish General promulgated a proclamation, in which he reminded the Britons of their Irish origin, and called upon them to join his standard, with the alacrity and spirit of men who were actuated with pure patriotism, and the ardent desire of liberty. The arrival of the auxiliaries revived the hopes of the oppressed Britons, and raised their dejected spirits. The Romans having at this juncture, marched against the Picts, the Irish General, at the head of the combined army, soon set out in pursuit of them. Agricola, aware of the power of the army in his rear, took up a strong position on the Grampian Hills; and there fearlessly and confidently, waited the approach of his pursuing foe.

Notwithstanding the strength of Agricola's inaccessible position, the Irish General resolved to attack him, vainly hoping that the valour of the Irish army would surmount all difficulties and disadvantages. Though the assault was conducted to the very centre of the Roman army, with the most enthusiastic and intrepid bravery, still Roman experience and discipline proved too formidable in such a vantage ground for Irish heroism. The combined army was cut to pieces, and Cormac, with his whole staff, died nobly on the fiercely contested field of glory. As soon as the news of this disaster reached Ireland, it generated alarm in every mind; and the dread of a visit from the Romans was the feeling that predominated in every heart. The monarch, far from sharing in the general panic, bore the misfortune of his arms with that fortitude which is inspired by hope.

He proceeded to raise fresh forces, with which, in person, he resolved to make another struggle with the Romans.

But while he was accelerating his martial preparations, and organizing plans to retrieve the loss his arms had sustained, a conspiracy, set on foot by Elim, king of Ulster, constrained him to abandon his designs of foreign warfare, in order to chastise his domestic enemies. The defeat of the Irish army, in the Pictish campaign, was wholly attributed by the factious insurgents to the king, which roused the ebullition of popular feeling, strongly against him, so that Elim in the course of his march to Tara, saw his forces daily augmented by bands of the discontented. The monarch marshalled his household

troops, and with all the raw levies he could collect in such an untoward emergency, marched forth in all the pride of patriotic valour to oppose the malecontents. The hostile powers came to an engagement at *Carlanstown*,* in the county of Meath, where the gallant king was totally defeated, and deprived of life and crown, A. D. 86. The next day after this battle, ELIM, the victor, was solemnly invested with the royal prerogatives, at the palace of Tara. ELIM's descent was directly from IR, the son of Milesius. No sooner had he been seated on the throne, than he caused the national estates to enact a law for the banishment of *Tuathal*, the infant son and sole heir of the last monarch. When the edict was published, the Prince, with his mother and brethren, fled to Albania. After this expulsion, the new King thought he might play the despotic tyrant with impunity.

The Heremonian nobility, against whom he cherished the most vindictive feelings of jealousy and hatred, were the marked objects of his rancorous resentment.

His unjust aggressions upon the rights and liberties of this royal sept, the most powerful in the kingdom, were the forerunners of his own downfall. The arbitrary measures he every day resorted to, served to fan the flame of popular disaffection to his government, and a well organized conspiracy, which had been long in process of fomentation, at last broke out in open and armed defiance against a king who trampled on the behests of justice, and, who regardless of all moral injunctions, oppressed his people, according to the unrestrained dictates of his own vicious passions.

As soon as the insurgents conceived themselves formidable enough to take the field, they proclaimed the exiled *TUATHAL* monarch of Ireland. When the Prince, at the court of his grand-father, the Pictish king, learned of the manifestation of the public mind in his favour, he invaded Ireland with a considerable force of his Irish adherents, and Scottish allies. Scarcely had he unfurled his standard on the shores of Connaught, ere the whole population flocked to his ranks. At this juncture an alarming famine prevailed in Ireland, which visitation the cunning Druids, with whom Elim was no favorite, speciously attributed to Divine displeasure at the tyrannic acts of the reigning monarch.

The march of *Tuathal* from the coast of Mayo to the borders of Meath resembled a triumphal procession.

Elim, not being then in a situation to hazard a battle, abandoned his palace at Tara, and with all his forces and followers retreated to the territories of his brother-in-law, the king of Leinster. *TUATHAL* meeting no resistance, entered Tara, where the Druids, the Princes of his house, as well as the greater portion of the nobility, gave him an enthusiastic welcome. As soon as the ceremony of his coronation was over, he invaded Leinster, for the avowed purpose of chas-

* *CARLANSTOWN*, the scene of this battle, is a rural village, 34 miles from Dublin, mostly occupied by industrious farmers. There is a large cattle fair held here on the first of every May, which is numerously attended. The country around it is richly cultivated. The abbey which was founded here by Walter de Lacy, A. D. 1186, is a heap of mutilated ruins, without a distinctive feature, save two mural fragments, of its pristine architecture.

tising Eochaidh, the king of that province, for his temerity in supplying Elim with forces and other means of warfare. Elim, on the other hand, resolved to recover his lost crown or perish in the attempt, made a stand at a place called *Aicle*, in the county of Dublin. The battle which ensued, as fierce and bloody as any recorded in the Irish annals, terminated in the discomfiture and destruction of Elim and his army. Eochaidh, the king of Leinster, and the survivors of his army, who had suffered dreadfully in the conflict, bent their flight towards Ferns. The victorious monarch after superintending the burial of the dead, proceeded on his march to the capital of Leinster.

Eochaidh, in order to save Ferns from the horrors of a storm, sent a Laureate Bard, and a chief Herald, to the conqueror, to announce his unqualified submission to such terms as he might think proper to prescribe. Tuathal's requisitions of tribute, though exorbitant, as we are told, in the extreme, were liquidated with all possible despatch, which averted the ruin that impended over the fate of Leinster.

With a rich acquisition of spoils and trophies, the Irish monarch returned to Tara, where he was received, by all classes of the people, with the most enthusiastic demonstration of popular affection and regard.

His magnanimity of soul, and his martial bravery, furnished the Bards with ample themes at this epoch for the display of poetic genius. Immediately after his return he convoked an assembly of the national delegates. He opened his grand and memorable convention by an energetic speech from the throne, in which he bewailed in pathetic eloquence, the miseries which had so long flowed from that fruitful source of a country's direst misfortune—INTERNAL DISCORD.

"Gentlemen,"* added he, "let us entitle ourselves to the gratitude of posterity, by desiccating the fountain whose current has for ages borne on its malignant effusion the royal blood of Milesius. Let its destructive overflowings be confined hereafter within the immovable and sacred boundaries of a secretory law, which I solemnly invoke you, in the name of our country, I earnestly conjure you in the name of humanity, in the name of my ancestral rights, and of those legitimate claims, which the valour of my illustrious progenitors Heremon, and Jughaine the Great, won by their bravery for their descendants, to enact in your legislative wisdom, and confirm by the solemnity of your oaths; so that this ordinance may crush civil strife for ever in Ireland. Raise a barrier, I implore you against the ambition of the Heberian and Irian dynasties, and protect inviolable the throne of Heremon from the unfounded pretension of usurpation.

"Behold, Senators! the Roman legions menacing our coasts, and pampering their lofty hopes with the expectation of subjecting this sacred Isle, rich with the dust of Milesian heroes, to their tyrannic

* This speech which is to be found in the original Irish, in Bishop *"Molloy's genealogies of Irish Kings,"* was never before, we confidently believe, given in the English language. We are aware that our translation is far distant from the spirit and beauty of the original.—AUTHOR.

yoke. Will you suffer your wives and daughters to share the ignoble fate of the females of Britain and Albania: will you suffer the Roman Eagles to perch on the national standard of *Gathelus*, that sacred standard which the great Hebrew prophet, Moses, gave, after blessing it, to the founder of the Milesian race? Be but united in patriotism, be but firm in concord, and the Irish atmosphere shall never be poisoned by the breath of the Roman invaders.

“When we march forth to battle, the coming foe, with souls enkindled with the spirit of patriotism, the despoiler’s power will recede from our spears, as the foaming waves recoil after being broken and dissolved on the shelving rocks of our shores. Yes, Senators, if that demon which has for centuries been the curse and bane of Ireland, destructive and intestine *DISSENSION*, makes no chasms in our devotion and love of country, the Romans shall find us invincible, and as firm in the fight as the majestic mountain, which, while seated on its ocean throne, seems to look down with smiling contempt at the idle rage of the turbulent billows that bursts on its rocky footstool.”

This harangue produced a great sensation in the minds of the national assembly, and all the members of which, after giving expression to a burst of enthusiastic acclamation, rose with one simultaneous accord, and swore by the sun, moon, and stars, to bear true and unshaken allegiance to Tuathal, and to his legitimate posterity. They then passed a law excluding the descendants of Heber, Ir, and Ith, from the Irish throne for ever.* The monarch’s heart was touched with gratitude by the devotion of the Convention, and the facility with which they had enacted a law, that he vainly imagined would secure the regal authority to his most remote posterity. But the sequel of this chapter will add another proof to the instability of human greatness, and an exemplifying instance, that those princes who place their trust on the permanence of popular opinion, only built the edifice of hope on a sinking quagmire of delusion.

By his address and eloquence he wound up the feelings of the national representatives to the highest key-note of his wishes. They legislated on every measure, according to his dictation: the ambitious monarch willed, and the obsequious senate promptly obeyed.

To carry their complaisance as far into servility as possible, they appropriated to the royal domains of Tara, a large tract of country, now known by the names of the counties of West and East Meath, alienated from Leinster, Connaught and Ulster. By their decree this portion of land was to be the mensal patrimony of the reigning sovereign, in order to enable him to entertain his guests with all the plenty and pomp of Royal Irish hospitality.† In the Irish records,

* “No law was ever more solemnly recognised than this, in favour of Tuathal’s family. It shows how sensible this people were, of the evils attending an elective form of government, although their manners and customs would not admit of any other. It ended finally in the ruin of the nation by the fatal contests and hostilities of the O’Neils and the O’Connors.”—*Dissertations on the Irish History*.

† “A people who carried the idea of munificent hospitality to the most boundless generosity, could not be censured for furnishing means to a king to entertain his visitants in a style commensurate with his dignity.”—NICHOLSON.

“When the convention of Tara passed this law, they were only acting a pat-

the county of Meath is designated "*Fearon Buird Righ Erion*," or the Table Lands of the monarch of Ireland. Tuathal was most assiduous in his endeavours to gain the good opinion of the Druids, whose religious influence over the public mind possessed a preponderating power of superstition. The reverential respect which he paid them in public, added much to their sanctimonious consequence in the nation. In each portion of his newly acquired domain, he built a palace, as well as a Druidical temple. The temple at *Flachtga*, now called New Grange, in the county of Louth, about five miles north of Drogheda, was, if we may judge from appearances, a superb pile of architecture, whose ruins still remain to convince the incredulous of its ancient grandeur.* This edifice was dedicated to the moon, and in it for ages the Druids offered sacrifices on the eve of every first of November, when annually all the Druids of the nation attended to worship, and kindle what was denominated the sacred fire, because every householder in the kingdom was compelled by law to extinguish every spark on his hearth, and under pain of being branded with impiety, to procure at a stipulated price, from the arch-Druids of *Samhuin* fresh fire for the winter. The temple of *Usneach*, in the County of Westmeath, was sacred to the worship of Bel, or the Sun, where the religious ceremonies and oblations of that deity were performed with great pomp and solemnity, on every first day of May. On this great Druidical festival, two fires were kindled in every district of the country, in honour of the pagan god. "It was," says Keating, "a solemn custom at this time, A. D. 101, to drive a number of cattle of every kind between these fires; this

riotic part, as hospitality was, in their opinion, one of the highest virtues that could adorn an Irish king."—VALLANCEY.

"The decree was made for the separation of a large tract of land from three provinces, for the demesne land of the crown, in order to supply the monarch's table with those sumptuous and luxurious viands, which distinguished the hospitality of the ancient Irish."—WARNER.

"Tuathal, in order to render all future kings of the island the better able to keep down the aristocratical spirit, took counties of considerable extent from the other provinces, and formed a sixth province known by the name of Meath. This noble domain, added to the ordinary revenues, rendered his successors more independent and respectable than the monarchs who reigned in ancient times."—O'CONNOR.

* "It is a ridiculous assumption in some English writers, who to gratify their prejudice, maintain that the ancient Irish were not eminent in architecture before the invasion, as the round towers, antique cathedrals of Cashel, Clonard, Armagh, Ardfer, and many others, with hundreds of old abbeys, and innumerable Druidical altars and caves, to this day exhibit ruins which would be admired among those of a Palmyra or a Babylon for their striking grandeur of design, and beauty of workmanship. The Tumulus and Druidical cave, near the town of Drogheda, which were built in the first century, according to the learned Camden and Raymond, by Tuathal, monarch of Ireland, must impress every traveller with a deep sense of the ingenuity of the royal designer and ingenious architect. The cave, which is elegantly vaulted with polished marble slabs, indented into each other, is eighty feet long, with a marble paved floor, and walls incrustured with the same material. There is a *bas-relief*, and hieroglyphic inscriptions on some of the panels, on both sides of the entrance boldly sculptured. Dr. Lihwyd, the celebrated Welsh antiquarian, visited this cave, where, on causing an excavation to be made in the floor, he discovered a gold coin of the Emperor Valentinian."—*Vide Beau-ford's ancient Topography of Ireland*.

We have already described the cave of New Grange, in the course of this history.

was conceived to be an antidote and a preservation against the murrain, or any other distemper among live stock, for the year ensuing.

“And from those fires that were made in honour of the god Bel, or Belus, the day upon which the Christian festival of St. Philip, and St. James is observed, is called in Irish, *La Baeltinne*, (the day of Bel’s fire,) which is still celebrated by rustic dances and other amusements, in different parts of Ireland. So intent was Tuathal on raising the morals of his people to the highest pitch of virtuous refinement, that to promote connubial alliances, he offered prizes to such young men as would select their wives at the great fair of Tailtean, near Kells, where he erected a temple for the celebration of the marriage contract.” Here rival knights contended at tilts and tournaments for the ladies of their love, and poets sang, and rustics wrestled, to win the smiles and hearts of the fair. O’Flaherty, in his relation of the Tailtean games, says, “that the strictest order and most becoming decency were observed in this meeting; for the men were placed by themselves; the women also had a peculiar station, at a convenient distance, assigned them, where the parents treated about the disposal of their children, and as soon as the articles were agreed upon, the young man presented a garland of roses and May flowers to the elected object of his choice, and then led her to the Druidical altar, where the nuptial rite was religiously solemnized by the Druids.”*

MR. MOORE, in relating the Druidical ceremonies at the temple of Usneach, writes:—“The sacred hills and Tumuli of the Irish were appropriated to a variety of purposes; for there the sacrifice was offered by the priest, from thence the legislator or Judge promulgated his decrees, and where the king, on his inauguration, was presented with the wand of power. Of these consecrated high places, the most memorable was the hill of Usneach, in West Meath, as well from the national convention, of which it was the frequent scene, as because, upon its summit the limits of the five provinces of Ireland touched; and, in like manner, as the field of Enna was called ‘the navel of Sicily,’ and the site of the temple of Delphi, ‘the navel of the earth’s,’ so the stone which marked this common boundary of the five provinces into which the Island was then divided, was termed the ‘navel of Ireland.’ Here the Druids on solemn occasions were accustomed to hold their meetings.”

This wise, clement, and truly beneficent Prince, caused all the noble institutions of his famous predecessor, *Ollamh Fodhla*, to be revived and renovated. An efficient police was established, and agriculture and commerce received a stimulating impulse from the active solicitude and attention of the sovereign, that carried them to the most flourishing perfection. Indeed, at this juncture, we have

* “The sports of this famed fair, which continued fourteen days, consisted of chariot racing, feats of chivalry, hurling, and other manly exercises. Noble amphitheatres were erected for the more easy reviewing the different exhibitions. At this fair, marriages and alliances were formed between the nobility and people, and every method studied to promote concord, morality and amusement.”—O’HALLORAN.

the authority of Tacitus, for asserting that Ireland was the most commercial nation in the west of Europe.

MR. JOHN D'ALTON, in his valuable Prize essay, on the ancient history, religion, learning, arts and government of Ireland, says: "the reign of Tuathal, commencing A. D. 130, is that which reflects most popular splendour on the Irish annals, in the constitution and legislation which he established. Then it was that the kings and nobles began to devote themselves to sciences, hitherto confined to the Magi and Philosophers, and to compile that too slandered code, the Brehon laws.

Tuathal's sole desire was to exalt the moral, intellectual and war-like character of his subjects, and diffuse among them those benign blessings which spring from a prudent, just and energetic government."

Though the monarch devoted himself to the internal interests of his kingdom, with unwearied assiduity, he was not yet negligent of his military establishments, for he kept a watchful eye on the movements of the Roman legions in Britian and Caledonia, and was always ready with a standing army, to repel any attack they might direct against his coasts. To enable his uncle, the Pictish king, to resist the forces of the emperor Adrian, which were at this era, A. D. 118, after devastating Britain, menacing Caledonia with a predatory attack, he transported a large army to the assistance of the oppressed Picts. The Irish General, to whom the Pictish king assigned the chief command, immediately after landing, commenced offensive operations against the Romans, whom he defeated in two successive battles, and compelled to retreat in disorder to New Castle. The emperor, who was then in Wales, dreading that the Irish chieftain would push his conquests into the very heart of Britain, and thus deprive him of the whole country, hastened to Carlisle, where in person, with his lieutenant, Julius Severus, he inspected the building of the celebrated wall that ran from that town to New-Castle-upon-Tyne, a distance of sixty miles. The allied army encamped at Stirling, where the Generalissimo waited for orders from his sovereign to penetrate into Britain; but Tuathal and his council decided that this officer should not cross the Tweed in pursuit of the Romans. Shortly afterwards, an event occurred that lit up again the fires of civil war in Ireland, and constrained Tuathal to recall his forces from Caledonia. Eochaidh, king of Leinster, obtained the hand of the Princess *Dairine*, the monarch's eldest daughter in marriage. The royal bride was accompanied to the palace of Ferns, by her youngest sister, *Fithir*, a princess of extraordinary beauty. As soon as the king of Leinster had seen his lovely sister-in-law, whom our historians represent much more charming than his wife, he conceived a dislike for his consort, and a passionate desire to possess the young *Fithir*. To enjoy her person became the sole wish of his heart, the daily dream of his thoughts. As love is fruitful in expedients to obtain the object of its longing, he set out on a journey to Tara, shortly after the return thither of the Princess, and in his first audience with the king, assumed the most mournful air of melancholy sadness, while with sobs and sighs, and all the deceptive indi-

cations of woe, he declared that his queen had expired suddenly a few days before, "an event," said he, "which will inevitably break my heart, unless your majesty snatches me from the precipice of despair, by giving me the Princess *Fithir*, to sooth my sorrows, and replace in those vacant arms the counterpart of that angelic perfection, of which relentless death has robbed them." The monarch, sympathising in his assumed affliction, assured him, that if he could gain the affections of the Princess, he should oppose no obstacle to their union. Eochaidh being an adept in gallantry, seductively wooed, and triumphantly captivated the lady. The nuptials of the happy pair were speedily solemnized and consummated at Tara. In a short time afterwards, Eochaidh and his beauteous bride set out for the palace of Ferns. When they arrived there, the shame and amazement of Fithir on finding her sister alive, may be conceived, but cannot be expressed. The fiends of jealousy frowned malignantly in Dairine's countenance, as she loaded her poor innocent sister with the most opprobrious invectives of rage and resentment, which operated so potently on the tender sensibilities of her youthful victim, that she was seized with a fit of convulsions, which terminated her existence. Dairine, affected at the death of a sister whom before she loved so dearly, threw herself on the body, and in a paroxysm of grief plunged a dagger in her bosom.

The singular death of these princesses would be a fine theme for the tragic muse of SHEIL.

As soon as the monarch was made acquainted with the duplicity of the king of Leinster, and the consequent tragic fate of his daughters, his whole feelings were inflamed with burning indignation. He, in the rage of his wrath, swore before the altar of Bel, that his vengeance should be terrible, and commensurate to the atrocious perfidy of Eochaidh; and that he should not only punish himself, but lay waste his kingdom with fire and sword. The national estates, and provincial princes who were summoned on this memorable occasion, passed sentence of reprobation against Eochaidh, and supplicated the monarch to deprive him of his throne. War was instantly declared, and Tuathal, with a mind chafing with the glowing desire of revenge, led his army into Leinster, which in the course of his march, he devastated with the most dreadful ravages that an infuriated conqueror could employ in a sanguinary career of merciless depredations. Fire and blood, and smoking habitations, left legible traces of his destructive pathway in Leinster.

Eochaidh, with a few followers, fled from his palace in consternation, for he well knew that flight alone could save him from the implacable vengeance of the chief monarch. From the place of his secret refuge, he despatched his chief bard to Tuathal, with full powers to make offers of the most abject submission to such terms as he might think proper to exact from himself, and his now ruined kingdom.

The bard to whose subduing eloquence and accomplished address Eochaidh implicitly confided his dearest interests, succeeded in appeasing the choler of Tuathal, and by the patriotic charm of his song in melting his flinty heart to compassion. An armistice was

reluctantly granted by the conqueror, who soon after, by the persuasions of the poet, assented to a definitive treaty of peace, which permitted the humbled king of Leinster to enjoy, as a vassal, his life and crown, on the following hard and degrading conditions. He bound himself and his heirs by sworn covenant, as well as by the pledge of hostages, to pay every alternate year, for ever, to the monarch of Ireland, three thousand fat oxen, three thousand ounces of pure silver; three thousand silk mantles richly embroidered; three thousand fat hogs; three thousand prime wethers, and three thousand copper cauldrons.*

By a legislative ordinance, passed in the national convention, the spoils of this aggressive and wanton tribute were to be divided between the Irish monarch, the king of Ulster, and the prince of Orgial, as the O'Neil and O'Carroll, were the active allies of Tuathal, in the invasion of Leinster. It was for exacting the Leinster tribute, in the beginning of the eleventh century, from king *Maol Mordha*, that BRIAN the Great received the distinctive appellation, or surname of *Boroihme*. When Tuathal returned to Tara, flushed with the success that had attended his arms in Leinster, and satiated in revenge, he announced to the national convention his determination of invading Britain, and of driving the Romans out of that country; but while he was busily engaged in preparing the expedition on an extensive scale, a formidable revolt brought about by MAL, a prince of the Irian line, at once terminated his projects and his life, in the thirtieth year of his reign, A. D. 137.

TUATHAL, as a warrior and a statesman, possessed shining talents; and as a sovereign he displayed, during a glorious reign, the noblest virtues which can adorn the character of a monarch, and raise it up to an eminence in the affectionate regards of a nation. His aggressive and cruel conduct in Leinster, and his iniquitous and indiscriminate punishment of a whole people for the crime of their prince, were wicked and tyrannic acts of flagrant injustice, that have left a blotless stain upon his reputation, which no historian can ever expunge.

* "This tribute, whose exaction for subsequent ages after the death of Tuathal, produced such disasters and civil wars in the country, is a convincing proof that ancient Ireland abounded with wealth. The most brilliant conquest of Napoleon did not yield a more valuable contribution than the *Boroihme*, or *Leinster Tax*." *Gleanings of Irish History*.

"It was the source of much blood and confusion to the kingdom. Its amount is a demonstrative proof of the wealth and power of ancient Ireland."—O'HALLORAN.

"If there was any pretence for punishing the people of the province by this exorbitant fine, for the dishonour done to Tuathal by their prince, there was not surely the least shadow of justice in continuing it after his death; and we shall see in the sequel that the payment of it, though submitted to for several ages, was the frequent occasion of many contests, which proved fatal to the nobility and gentry on both sides, until it was abolished."—WARNER.

"Although the establishment made by Tuathal, throws great lustre on this period of our history, yet the imposition of the Boroihmean tribute on the province of Leinster, for the personal crimes of the Prince, was an act of flagitious tyranny." O'CONNOR.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Reign and death of Mal.—The accession of Feidhlimidh—the events of his reign.—He enacts a law of retaliation.—Death of Feidhlimidh.—Cathoir More is elected Monarch.—Con of the hundred battles revolts.—Battle of Rathkenny in Meath, and defeat and death of Feidhlimidh.—His singular will.—Con I. ascends the throne.—Sends an army to invade Leinster.

THE Druids, ever ready to succumb to power, quickly impressed the seal of religion on the usurpation of Mal, by crowning him with all the pompous solemnities of their imposing ritual, on the stone of destiny. The national estates, quite regardless of the solemn oath which they had lately taken, in presence of Tuathal, to exclude every candidate from the Irish throne, who was not of the royal blood of Heremon, promptly recognised by all legislative formalities, the new sovereign.

Mal, in order to acquire popularity, adopted every measure that he conceived might have a tendency to secure the permanence of his power. The two first years of his reign were speciously consecrated to the happiness of the kingdom; but the third year developed the native cruelty and despotism of the arbitrary tyrant.

The adherents of the late monarch were every where oppressed, and acts of the most aggressive enormity invaded the constitutional rights of the Irish people. He banished the wife and children of Tuathal to England, where they found a hospitable asylum at the court of *Sgaile Balbh*, who was then king of Britain, and father-in-law of the late monarch. The Irish Prince, young *Feidhlimidh*, by a display of valour and capacity, in a campaign against the Romans, rose to a high command in his uncle's army. Mal, daily dreading an insurrection, refused to assist the Britons with troops, a fact which accounts for the great scope of British and Pictish territories, which the Emperor Antonius, at this period, A. D. 139, subjected to his dominion. It was this celebrated Emperor, surnamed the *pious*, that raised the rampart which extends from the Frith of the Clyde to that of Forth. The martial fame of *Feidhlimidh* buoyed up the hopes of the Heremonians in Ireland, while it oppressed the heart of Mal with alarm. The despotism of the king transgressed those limits, within which justice and moderation would confine regal power. His excesses reached that point of atrocity where resistance is forced to repel intolerable aggression. The goaded people flew to arms, proclaimed *Feidhlimidh* monarch, and denounced Mal as a ruthless tyrant. As soon as the Prince heard of the revolt, he hastened to his native land, and placed himself at the head of his devoted adherents. The elevation of his standard was the signal of a general insurrection; so that before the Prince reached the borders of Meath, he saw his army swelled to a magnitude that insured success. Mal sallied forth from Tara, with all the forces he could levy, in order to make a gallant struggle for his life and crown.

The hostile armies came to an engagement in the neighbourhood of *Navan*, in the county of Meath, A. D. 141, which, after a sanguinary struggle, that displayed prodigies of bravery on both sides, ter-

minated the reign and life of Mal, in the fourth year of his regal government. The conqueror then made his triumphal entry into Tara, where he was crowned monarch of Ireland. He summoned the national representatives, to whom he submitted a new code of laws, which in conjunction with the most learned of the Brehons, he had designed for the government of his kingdom. In his speech from the throne, he informed the senate, that the formation of a system of jurisprudence, whose great essence should be equitable justice, had long occupied his mind.

He then, in a luminous harangue, detailed his digest, which embraced some of the best ordinances of *Ollamh Fodhla*, Jughaine More, Connor, Moran, and Tuathal, with the following amendments to their laws, which he conceived would perfect a model of legislation. The first statute declared that retaliation was the very behest of justice, and that the man who deprived another of life, should be seized and given up to the friends of the deceased, in order that they might inflict the punishment of death upon him.

Every bodily injury, such as wounding, maiming, or disfiguring, was according to the strict and rigid decision of inexorable retribution, inflicted in an equal degree on the first perpetrator. It was a retaliatory law that extorted an "eye for an eye," a limb for a limb, and a "tooth for a tooth."* Those who despoiled their neighbours of their goods and cattle, were obliged to make ample restitution.

In this case the law provided, that in case the aggressors could not compensate the injured parties, that the former should be visited with a punishment commensurate to the extent of the crime. "This most salutary law," says Dr. O'Halloran, "had all the good effects that were expected from it, and eased the subjects from great oppressions. Before its enactment, the most atrocious of crimes, a very few excepted, were punished here, as in every other part of Europe, by *eric*, or fine only."

This *eric*, now abolished by this legislative sage, which means in the Irish, compensation, was assessed by a judge, who regulated its amount proportionate to the quality of the assassinated person, for the benefit of whose relatives it was levied from the goods or lands of the offender. But if the property of the delinquents could

* "By the tenor of this law, the people of Ireland were brought to more humanity, honesty, and good manners of every kind, than they ever were before; and the monarch enjoyed the fruits of his just and useful administration, during nine years of his reign, till a natural death removed him out of the world. A much greater authority than that of any human legislator hath given a sanction to the law established by this monarch; and it seems astonishing that it should be discontinued in any Christian country. It is not only the most equitable law in itself, I presume to say, that can be conceived, against wilful injury, but in its consequence bids fairer than any other to promote public order and integrity. In England, we presume too much on our power of making laws, and too far infringe on the command of God, by taking away the lives of men, in the manner we do, for theft and robbery; and this is not only a pernicious error, 'extreme justice is an extreme injury,' but a national abomination. A robber, indeed, in this country, sees with his eyes open, and knows the penalty which he is going to incur; but the wilfulness of the crime is no sort of excuse for making the punishment far exceed the heinousness of the transgression; and who will deny that a little theft or robbery, perhaps of the value of two or three shillings only, is not punished infinitely beyond a just proportion, when it is punished with death."—WARNER.

not be found, the officers of justice had power to distrain the possessions of their kindred, in order to make up the stipulated sum for the satisfaction of the aggrieved party.* The eric, or punitive amercement was one of the legislative ordinances of eastern nations, for in the Book of Job, a reference is made to it, where it is said, "skin for skin; yea, all that a man hath, will he give for his life." All the legislative provisions in the famous code of Feidhlimidh received the seal of senatorial approbation. This Prince, who possessed all those ennobling virtues, that shine in the three-fold character of the statesman, philosopher and king, is distinguished in our annals by the appellation of "*Rearaidh-Glige*," or the law-giver. His reign, of nine years, was one continued scene of justice, clemency, and happiness. The blessings of peace were enjoyed by the nation, without the turmoil and misery of foreign or domestic war. The virtues of the king were examples for the imitations of the people, so that morals and intelligence rose to a high pitch of excellence under his salutary administration. Feidhlimidh, after governing Ireland for a period of nine years of unexampled tranquillity, and gaining the affections of a whole people, died quietly at the palace of Tara, a fate for which but few of his predecessors had been destined. His funeral honours were celebrated with extraordinary pomp, and his remains interred in the royal mausoleum of Cruachan, in the county of Roscommon.

MR. MOORE, in his observations on the legislative enactments of this monarch, writes, "Whatever, in other respects may have been the civilization of the Irish before the reign of King Feidlim, (A. D. 164) their notions of criminal jurisprudence were as yet but rude and barbarous; since we learn that the old law of 164, retaliation was then for the first time exchanged for the more lenient as well as less demoralizing mode of punishment by a mulct or eric. Some writers, it is true, have asserted that the very reverse, of what has been just stated, was the fact, and that Feidlim, finding the law of compensation already established, introduced the *Lex Talionis* in its stead. But this assuredly would have been to retrograde rather than to advance in civilization; one of the first steps towards civility, in the infancy of all nations, having been the substitution, in criminal justice, of fines proportionate to the offences,† for the savage law of retaliation, and the right of private revenge. Should even this improved

* "There was no remedy against these assassinations, but by a mulctative eric. It was a reparation better than none, and generally levied on the offender's kindred, to make satisfaction to the clan for the loss of their Tigern, or the Tigern's vassal."

† "Both by Spenser, and Sir John Davis, this custom of compounding the crime of homicide by fine is spoken of as peculiar to the Irish, and the latter writer even grounds upon it a most heavy charge against that people, either forgetting that this mode of composition for manslaughter formed a part of the Anglo-Saxon code, or else wilfully suppressing that fact for the purpose of aggravating his list of charges against the Brehon law. As there will occur other opportunities for considering this question, I shall here only remark that however it may have been customary among the ancient Pagan Irish to punish homicide by a mulct, or eric, alone, there are proofs that, in later times, and before the coming of the English, not only was wilful murder, but also the crimes of rape and robbery, made legally punishable by death."—*O'Reilly on the Brehon laws*, Vol. I. Section 8.

stage of jurisprudence, under which murders of the darkest kind might be compounded for, appear sufficiently barbarous, but it should be recollected that neither the Greeks at the time of the Trojan war, nor the English under their great ruler, Alfred, had yet advanced a step farther."

The national estates had, at last, after a long cessation, an opportunity of exercising their elective privileges in choosing a new monarch from the Heremonian stock. The object of their election was *Cathoir More*, the grandson of the celebrated hero *Gaoltha*, or the Galgacus of Tacitus, who as commander of the Irish militia, fought so valiantly against Julius Agricola, in Britain.

This Prince, who was lineally descended from king Heremon, was a man of genius, courage, and magnanimity of soul. In the first year of his reign, he suppressed two insurrections set on foot by the Heberians. But he only smothered for a time the flames of revolt, without extinguishing them. A Prince of his own family, fomented a rebellion, that eventually put a period to his existence, in the third year of his reign. The instigator of this insurrection was the famous Con, who afterwards made such a shining figure in our history, as "the hero of the hundred battles." He fought as a soldier of fortune in Gaul and Britain, so that to the skill of the general, he added the chivalry of the champion. He was prepossessing in personal appearance, and elegant in manners, so that the gifts of nature and the graces of education, united in embellishing his body and mind. By those fascinating attractions he never failed to win supporters for his cause. He carried on his plans with such singular secrecy and celerity, that Cathoir was not aware of their existence, until Con was ready to perfect them in the field, with a numerous army of natives and mercenaries. The monarch, while dreaming of safety, was awoke to the real danger of his situation, by the explosion which opened, as it were, a volcanic gulf under his very throne. Cathoir was too brave to be intimidated, for he had a soul to which fear was a stranger, and he hastened towards his enemy's lines with that confidence and courage, which ever sustained the intrepidity of the hero. Both armies met at *Rathkenny*,* (called then *Moigh acha*) in Meath. On the night preceding the battle that was to decide life and empire, Cathoir awoke from a dream, in which the disastrous results of the following day were presented to his mind. He summoned his secretary, and all his principal officers, among whom were his ten sons, to his chamber, and communicated to them the fore-warnings of his vision. "To-morrow's sun," said he, "shall beam on my dead body, but I shall die like my gallant ancestors resisting the foe, while I have strength to stand at the head of my brave army, in whose ranks there is not a single coward." After conversing cheerfully for some time, he desired all to leave him, except his secretary, whom he detained to engross his will. The bequests of this testament, as given by *O'Flaherty*, from the authentic records in the *Book*

* RATHKENNY is a small vicarage in the County of Meath, and Barony of Navan. The Protestant church is a large structure; but from the paucity of Protestants, it is suffered to fall into decay. 1835.

of *Lecan*, prove that Cathoir More, or the Great, must have been then the wealthiest monarch in Europe.

"I, Cathoir, monarch of all Ireland, do hereby publish my will, to which, in testimony of its genuineness, I subscribe my name, and affix my royal signet: Be it known then to all Brehons, judges and chieftains of this our kingdom, that after our death, we order that our property, possessions, effects, and goods, shall be distributed in the following manner: We bequeath to our beloved son, *Rosa Failge*,* the kingdom of Leinster, and as a further token of our affection, we give with it ten golden shields, ten swords, with golden hilts, ten golden cups; and our sincere wishes that he may preserve the glory of our name, and be the father of a numerous and warlike posterity to govern Tara. To our second son, *Daire Barach*, we leave the territory of *Tuath Laighean*, (the present county of Dublin, and part of Wicklow) over which, we hope, he and his posterity will reign to the end of time; with this we also bequeath him one hundred and fifty spears, of the finest fabric and richest embellishment, fifty shields of curious workmanship, and golden ornaments; fifty of the brightest and richest swords that can be found in the armory, fifty rings of the purest gold; one hundred and fifty embroidered mantles, and seven military standards, whose staffs are pure silver. To my third son, *Breasal*, I leave seven large and well equipped ships, fifty shields, five swords with gold baskets and green blades, and five war chariots with horses and silver-mounted harness. With these, we likewise desire, he may have the lands on the banks of the river Amergin, and let him be informed, that it has been our wish that he will keep the Belgic inhabitants under proper restraint, as they are disposed to be refractory. To our fourth son, *Cetach*, and our fifth son, *Feargus-Luascan*, we leave possessions that are sufficient to sustain their princely dignity. As our sixth son never betrayed a martial spirit, or a poetic genius, property would be thrown away if given to him; we therefore only bequeath him a backgammon table, for the instruments of gaming are the arms that are suitable for a man whose spirit falls so low in ambition. Our seventh son, *Aongus*, is to be fully endowed by his brothers. To *Eochaidh Timhin*, our eighth son, we shall leave nothing but our blessing, for he is a weak man, who was so silly as to give away a tract of land,

* "*Rosa Failge*, or the Hero of the Rings, is the great progenitor of the O'Connors of *Faly*, or *Offaly*, a district of country now comprehending the King's and Queen's counties, and the greater parts of Kildare."—*Chronicles of Erin*.

"Roger and Arthur O'Connor, with their children, are the only legitimate descendants of this sept of the O'Connors now living."—*Outlines of Irish History*. Dublin, 1829.

"The O'Connors *Faly* were in all ages a very martial and renowned family, as all our annals testify, (both before and after the invasion of Henry II.) until they were crushed under the superiority of relentless power in the reign of Philip and Mary. John O'Connor, Esq. of Mount Pleasant, (the father of Messrs. Roger and Arthur O'Connor) enjoys, at this day, a part of his ancestor's estate."—*Dissertations on the History of Ireland*.

"The hereditary princes of Leinster successively retained the ancient title of *Failge*, in proof of their descent and royal extraction from *Rosa*, whom they justly claim as the greatest ancestor of the family. From *Rosa Failge*, are descended the noble families of the O'Dempsys, O'D'in's, O'Tools, O'Byrnes, O'Dunluing, (Dorolings) O'Duffys, and Mac Cormicks."—KEATING.

claimed as a promise which he made in his sleep. Let our ninth son, *Criomthan*, have fifty brass balls, with brass maces to play with; ten backgammon tables, of curious workmanship, and two chess boards. To our tenth son, *Fijacha-Baiceadh*, we leave the territory of *Inbher Slainge*, (Wexford) as an affectionate token of our approbation of his manly spirit and fearless courage.* As we admire our nephew Tuathal for his exalted qualities, we bequeath him ten chariots, with war horses richly furnished, five pair of backgammon tables, five chess boards with golden men, thirty shields embossed with gold, and fifty swords of the most elegant fabric and polish. To *Mogh Chorb*, our chief general, we leave one hundred black and white cows, with their calves, coupled two and two, connected with brass yokes; one hundred shields, one hundred steel javelins coloured red, one hundred burnished battle axes, fifty yellow mantles of the finest silk, one hundred war steeds, one hundred gold clasps, one hundred silver goblets, one hundred large vats of yew, fifty brazen trumpets, fifty chariots and horses, and fifty brass chaldrons, with the privilege of being a privy counsellor to the king of Leinster. And finally, we leave to our kinsman, the Prince of Leix, one hundred cows, one hundred shields, one hundred swords, one hundred spears, and seven ensigns emblazoned with "the royal arms of Ireland."†

At an early hour on the following morning, Cathoir was in the field, animating and disposing his army, for the decisive conflict. The first attack was made by the royal household troops, under the immediate orders of the monarch, by a furious and impetuous charge, on Con's centre, which he withstood with heroic valour, and even compelled them to give ground. Both armies, as if by mutual consent, paused for a moment, and then rushed on each other with renewed impetuosity and rage.

The conflict became desperate; it was the fierce combat of Prince against Prince, and of soldier against soldier. At length, however, after the protracted struggle of six hours, the gallant Cathoir fell on the crimson field, and victory rested its bloody pinions on the banners of Con. This Prince came to the throne not only recommended by victory, but by the popularity of his father, Feidhlimidh, whose memory the Irish nation revered. He was crowned at Tara, by the Druids, A. D. 153. His reign, which developed the most eminent events, forms a peculiar epoch of glory in Irish history.

Con Ceadcathadh, or of the hundred battles, who was the grandson of the great Tuathal, possessed capabilities for the field, and the cabinet, in each of which spheres, during a turbulent reign of twenty years, he displayed talents of a superior order. No sooner had he been seated on the throne, than he issued orders to the tributary

* "From *Fijacha-Baiceadh* (or the lame prince) sprung the great families of Mac Murroch, Kavanagh, O'Toole, Murphy, and Kensellagh, who were in succession, kings of Leinster."—MOLLOY.

† "It was on account of his immense riches that this prince is called Cathoir More, or the Great; for we do not find that either as a warrior or a statesman he evinced those rare abilities, which would entitle him to the surname of the Great.

"It is, however, to be questioned, if any other monarch in Europe, was ever possessed of a more valuable personal estate than this Irish king."—WARNER.

kings and princes of the kingdom, to supply his army with their stipulated quota of troops, and subsidies of money. With this combined army, the monarch meditated the subjugation of Leinster, over which, before he possessed it by conquest, he appointed his late tutor, Criomthan, viceroy.

As soon as the people of Leinster were apprised of the approach of an invading army, they despatched messengers to their hereditary general, Cumhal, the son of Frenmor, and descendant of the monarch *Nuadha*, urging him to hasten to their assistance, and to the protection of his relatives, the oppressed children of Cathoir More. The gallant Cumhal, who was at this era, A. D. 154, in Britain, with his *Clana Baoisgne*, or Leinster knights, fighting against the Romans, immediately on the arrival of the messengers at his camp, set off for Ireland.

When Cumhal reached the head-quarters of the army of Leinster, at Naas, in the county of Kildare, he published a manifesto, in which he denounced the monarch as an ambitious prince, who sought his own aggrandizement, on the ruin of the persecuted children of his predecessor, Cathoir More. The Governor, and troops of Con, were speedily drove out of Leinster, by Cumhal, at the head of the combined forces of that province, as well as the auxiliary troops which Eogan,* king of Munster, sent into the field to check the ambitious projects of Con.

When Con learned that his viceroy and army were expelled from Leinster, he despatched heralds to Naas, requiring the immediate attendance of Eogan and Cumhal, with their vassals at Tara. But instead of evincing any indication of submission, they replied to the heralds by bidding defiance to the requisition of the monarch, which provoked his indignation. A declaration of war against Leinster and Munster, was the immediate result. Eogan and Cumhal made great preparations to carry on the contest, and as soon as they mustered all the forces they could collect, they commenced their march towards Tara, avowing their determination of dethroning Con, and placing the crown on the head of the heir of Cathoir More. The entire population almost appeared in arms on either side, and the approaching hostilities threatened to be fierce and terrible in the extreme. Both armies, eager for the fight, marched to the King's county, where, as if by mutual agreement, they selected the plains of Lena, as the scene of one of the most destructive and desperately contested conflicts that was ever fought in Ireland.

"The generals on each side," says Dr. O'Halloran, "remark the dispositions of the enemy's troops; and each chief is allotted his ground, and the troops he is to attack. We are surprised with what minuteness this is detailed; but particularly in the battle of Lena, where every commander is assigned his particular service: a proof that in ancient times neither generalship, nor military abilities were neglected." At the battle of Lena, courage and chivalry shone in their brightest lustre.

* "This prince, it must be observed, was known by four different names: he was called Eogan *Fidhfheathach*, Eogan More, Eogan *Faithlioch*; and *Modha Nuagat*."—KEATING.

CHAPTER XXV.

Battle of Lena.—Victory of Con.—Eogan, king of Munster, flies to Spain, marries a Spanish princess, invades Ireland, and defeats Aongus, king of South Munster.—Death of Aongus in battle.—Eogan defeats Con in three battles.—Division of Ireland between the rivals.—A new war.—Death of Eogan.—Invasion of Ulster, and death of Con.

As soon as the Lark was roused by the radiance of the morning sun, both armies were under arms and ready to commence the work of havoc and death.

The troops of Con, commanded by the Connaught champion, Gaul Mac Morni, heroically began the attack with their accustomed impetuosity. They bore down all before them, until Cumhal, with the Leinster knights, hastened to the centre of destruction, and formed, as it were, a wall of brass to stop the progress of Gaul. The two chieftains, Cumhal and Gaul, engaged each other sword in hand, while the knights of Connaught and Leinster emulated their valour, and joined in a most terrible combat. The fight continued for a long time with unabated courage and unflinching valour, when at last Cumhal fell under the sword of Gaul. His death spread panic and dismay among the Leinster troops, who, thinking all lost, began to fly away in the utmost disorder. It was in vain for Eogan, the king of Munster, to think of rallying them, for consternation deprived them at once of gallantry and discipline. The defeat they suffered was complete and decisive. Con pursued the fugitives to the borders of the county of Cork. Eogan, to evade the vengeance of his implacable enemy, Con, fled to Spain, leaving his territories in the hands of the conquerer. Eogan was received at the court of Spain with the greatest friendship and hospitality. During his exile there he succeeded in gaining the affections of the Spanish princess, Beara, whom he married. This alliance inspired himself, as well as his adherents in Ireland, with the hope of recovering his throne. After a short exile in Spain, he persuaded his father-in-law to fit out an expedition for him for the invasion of Ireland. He arrived at Waterford, after a short voyage, where a numerous body of friends and followers were in readiness to give him welcome and second his measures, and promote his designs, among whom, there was a Druid of the most exalted quality. No sooner had he concentrated his forces, than he marched towards Cashel, with the intention of avenging the aggressions which Aongus, king of South Munster, committed on his territories.

He attacked the South Munster army, under Aongus, in their entrenched camp at Feathard, in the county of Tipperary, and after an obstinate engagement, gained a complete victory over them. He drove Aongus before him, in the utmost confusion, to the county of Wicklow, where another battle took place, in which the South Munster army were totally routed, and their chief general, Lugha, killed. Aongus seeing his utter inability to oppose the triumphant progress of Eogan, fled to Tara to supplicate the aid of the supreme monarch.

Con, dreading the bravery, genius, and ambition of Eogan, listened with complaisance to Aongus's solicitations, and speedily raised for him an army of fifteen thousand men. With this reinforcement, and the remnant of his own shattered troops, Aongus returned to Munster.

As soon as Eogan learned that his enemy had augmented his army to such a formidable force, he retreated to *Ibh Leathan*, in the county of Cork, where he resolved to make a stand, and give battle to his pursuers. In this strong position Aongus attacked him; but the consequence was the signal defeat of the allied army, and the death of Aongus, and his principal officers. This victory not only strengthened the power and popularity of Eogan, but elevated his ambition to the determination of possessing the monarchy of Ireland. Eogan was certainly a prince of genius and valour, but Con was fully his equal in these attributes; so that the former knew, that in his way to the crown he had to contend against difficulties of the most fearful character.

Before he commenced the desperate game on which life and empire were depending, he sent his ambassadors, Druids, to all his allies, to sound their dispositions, and to ascertain whether they would join him in a war against the supreme monarch.

The cunning Druids, by the aid of superstition and artifice, were eminently successful in their embassies. The kings of Ulster and Leinster quickly despatched their disposable troops to the head quarters of Eogan. This accession, when combined with his own forces, swelled up his army to fifty-two thousand men. At the head of this formidable army, Eogan marched to Bray, in the county of Wicklow, where he was met by Con. A battle was the immediate result of the approximate encampment of both armies. In this, as well as in three successive engagements, Con was defeated, and compelled to fly in disorder before his pursuers to Cruachan, in the county of Roscommon. On arriving here, he was joined by Gaul Mac Morni, and the knights of Connaught. The victor in his pursuit, stopped one night at the palace of Tara, and then continued his march until he approached within a few miles of Con's camp. Selecting a favourable position he formed his encampment, and then, by the advice of a council of war, sent heralds to Con, demanding the surrender of the Irish crown. This demand fired the monarch with indignation, but by the advice of his privy council, he suppressed his resentment in the presence of the heralds, and signified to them his willingness to open negotiations with Eogan. As a first step towards peace, an armistice was soon concluded between the belligerents. After much altercation and dispute between the plenipotentiaries of both princes, a definitive treaty of peace was finally ratified.

By the stipulations of this famous treaty, Eogan was to possess and reign over the southern portion of Ireland, which was to be called "*Leath Mogha*," or Eogan's share. The other portion of the kingdom, comprehending the country from Wicklow to Galway, fell to the share of Con, and was denominated "*Leath Con*," or Con's half. The boundaries of this renowned division, were marked

by deep trenches which were cut, and by the erection of redoubts that were raised at several points. It was imperious necessity alone that compelled Con to sign a treaty which he considered ignominious and humiliating in the extreme, so that he was determined to violate its conditions as soon as he might find himself able to do so with impunity. A few months only elapsed after the ratification of peace, when he sent ambassadors to Leinster, to enforce the payment of the *Boroihme* tribute, which his grandfather, Tuathal, imposed on the people of Leinster. The requisition of the ambassadors was treated with contempt by the Leinsterians, which so exasperated Con, that he sent an army to enable his tax gatherers to exact the tribute. The people of Leinster, indignant at this aggressive act, rose in arms, attacked the forces of the monarch at *Maistean*, where, after a sanguinary battle, they gained a decisive victory over them. The Leinsterians flushed with victory, followed up their success to the very palace of Tara, from which, Con, with his whole court, was obliged to take flight to Connaught.

The conquerors took possession of the palace, where they seized upon all the treasures of the monarch. Con, mortally afflicted, and chagrined at this disaster, employed himself for two years in recruiting his army, in order to make a desperate effort for the recovery of his palace from the enemy. The Leinsterians, on the other side, were not idle; they were augmenting their forces and securing their positions by fortifications. At this era, A. D. 181, an event occurred that still farther increased the power and stimulated the pretensions of the people of Leinster. Eogan, in the course of a royal tour, visited Dublin, which was then called "*Atha Cliath-Dubhline*," or the passage over the ford of the black pool.* On making a survey of the city, he discovered that there were far more trading vessels on the North, than on the South side of the Liffey, which displeased him very much, as by the terms of the treaty with Con, the duties and customs arising from all vessels anchoring in the south of the river, were to appertain to him, while those in the north belonged to Con. Consequently, by the distribution of the shipping then, Eogan's revenue was not near equal to that of the monarch.

* During Eogan's sojourn in Dublin, at this time, his daughter *Dublana* was drowned, whilst bathing in the Liffey, from which circumstance, the place was called *Dublana*, in commemoration of the fatal catastrophe of the Princess.

"Prior to Eogan's visit, our annalists make mention of Dublin, under the name of *Aschhled*, *Lean Cliath*, from *Lean*, which signifies a harbour, and *Cliath*, which is the Irish appellation for hurdle, or wicker work. The ancient Irish made hurdles, which they placed in rivers and bays for catching fish. Many of these were thrown across the ford of the Liffey, hence the city of Dublin was called *Bally ath Cliath*, or the town of the ford of hurdles. The river Liffey bore anciently the name of *Avin Louiffa*, or the swift-rolling-water."—*Ancient Topography of Dublin*.

"The town of hurdles, on its *Dubh-line*, or black ford, with its huts of twigs, and humble and unsparing architecture, attracted the special protection of Heaven, at a very early period of its existence; "for, says Jocelyn, in his life of the patron and chief of all Irish saints, "St. Patrick, departing from the borders of Meath, and directing his steps towards Leinster, passed the river Finglas, came to a certain hill, almost a mile distant from *Ath Cliath*, 'the place of the ford,' now called Dublin, and casting his eyes about the place and the land circumjacent, he broke forth into this prophecy:—This small village (Dublin) shall hereafter become an eminent city:—it shall increase in riches, and in dignity, until at length it shall be lifted up into the throne of the kingdom."—*Old Dublin*, by Lady Morgan.

Against this breach of treaty, Eogan transmitted a manifesto to Tara, claiming instant reparation from Con.

"This relation of the trade of Dublin," says Dr. O'Halloran, "will be less doubted, when we recollect the evidence of Tacitus, about a century earlier; and to these we shall add, that in the days of St. Patrick we find it celebrated, *for its extent and magnificence, the number and riches of its inhabitants, the grandeur of its edifices, and the greatness of its commerce.*"

The extravagant requisitions made by the ambassadors of Eogan, at the court of Tara, irritated the monarch, and produced in his mind a conviction that Eogan evidently aspired to the monarchy of Ireland. A fresh war, therefore, became inevitable. When the ambassadors of Eogan returned and announced the unsuccessful termination of their mission, the ambitious king, caused war to be declared against Con. The hostile sovereigns made the most formidable preparations for a struggle, on the result of which, the fate of Ireland was suspended. Eogan put his troops in motion, and they had already advanced near the scene of the late battle of Lena, in the King's county, when the outposts of Con's army gave them assurance that their enemy was at hand. Con reviewed his troops on that plain where such glory had, a few years before, crowned his arms. Here he harangued his army, reminded them of their bravery in the first battle of Lena, and inspired them with the hope of gaining by their valour in the approaching contest a new triumph, which should immortalize their courage and gallantry. In a council of war held by Con, the evening prior to the battle, he informed his principal officers, that he intended to surprise Eogan, whose native and Spanish forces were superior in numerical strength to his own, at midnight. To this plan all the chiefs readily assented, except the chivalric Gaul, the second in command, under the monarch, who, rising up at the council board, said—"Sire, on the day that my first arms were put into my hands, I solemnly vowed, at the altar of Bel, and in the presence of his Druidical ministers, never to attack an enemy at night by surprise, or under any kind of disadvantage whatever. I trust that the vows I have thus pledged shall never be broken. To this day I have religiously adhered, as an Irish knight ought, to this promise; nor shall I now, Sire, break it; for my honour is dearer to me than my life." This romantic devotion to the laws of chivalry, the monarch praised for its magnanimity, although he thought that a general intrusted with the command of a whole army might be warranted by prudence to disobey its injunctions, on certain occasions. Con, however, finding that Gaul could not be prevailed upon, to assist in his project, resolved to assault the enemy's camp, without him or his knights, at midnight. He did so. Notwithstanding that the Munster troops were attacked by surprise, in the middle of the night, they yet fought with a valour and a courage that made Con repent of his rashness; the morning light presented to him, his army in a broken and shattered state, and were it not that Gaul came to his assistance, when it was clear day, Con and his troops would have been annihilated. Eogan, in repelling the assault, cut all before him, he moved like the living demon of fire, if such there be, through the hostile ranks, but at length the

mighty Gaul stood before him, sword in hand. "Now, said he," Eogan, "we meet in a fair field, let our swords decide which of us is the bavest." They fought desperately for an hour, when it was the fate of the gallant Eogan to fall mortally wounded. The contending armies suspended their hostilities during this heroic combat, between the renowned champions. The body guards of Eogan, raised up his corpse, pierced with innumerable wounds, on their shields, to the view of both armies. As soon as Gaul wiped away the tears which he shed for the death of his brave adversary, he exclaimed—"lay down the body of the heroic king of Munster, for he died as the noble and the valiant prince should die! Future Bards will tune a thousand harps in the celebration of his glory." The fall of Eogan dismayed and disheartened the Munster forces so that Con gained a signal victory.

Con's enemies were so appalled by his late success that they fled to hiding places in different parts of the country. At the death of Eogan, his eldest son, Olioll, was too young to be raised to the throne of Munster; consequently, Mac Niad, who so powerfully co-operated with Eogan, in recovering his kingdom, was appointed regent during the minority of the young prince. As soon as the regent was invested with plenary powers, the people of Munster with a united voice called upon him to lead them once more against Con, whom they denounced as a tyrant. Con, who was as wise as he was gallant, resolved to avert, if possible, another war, for which he was not prepared. He therefore sent ambassadors to the regent of Munster to congratulate him on his accession to his new office and dignity, and to express the wishes of the monarch that peace and amity should subsist between the courts of Tara and Munster.

The ambassadors, in order to win over Mac Niad to their propositions, had secret instructions to offer him the monarch's youngest daughter, the beauteous *Sadhbha*, in marriage. The ambassadors effected their purpose, and their negotiations closed by a definitive treaty of peace, whose terms were highly advantageous to Munster.

As soon as it was ratified, Mac Niad repaired to Tara, where his and the princess's nuptials were solemnized with great pomp and magnificence.

The ambitious Con, who had long looked with a jealous and envious eye on Ulster, whose king was ever foremost among his enemies, resolved now, when he had nothing to dread from Munster, to invade that country, and make its people feel the inflictions of his vengeance.

He accordingly raised a great army, and marched towards that country. When the Ultonians heard of his approach, they flew to arms, and advanced to meet him. Con never encountered men that opposed such a fierce resistance to his invasion as the Ultonians. They vanquished him in several battles, and ultimately totally defeated his whole army, and slew himself at an engagement near Dungannon,* in the county of Tyrone. There is, we must observe,

* Of Dungannon, a pretty and prosperous town, in the County of Tyrone, situated about eleven Irish miles North of Armagh, and 72 N. W. from Dublin, we will give a description when we bring this history down to the fifth age of the christian era.

a material discrepancy in the accounts of our annalists of the death of Con. The book called the "*Annals of the four Masters*" says he was slain at the battle of *Tuath Aimhrios*, in the county of Tyrone, while Keating and O'Flaherty assert "that he was assassinated in his bed at Tara." "But this last death," says O'Halloran, "is so inconsistent with the spirit of heroism, of those days, that I cannot by any means give it credence." His reign of thirty years, distracted Ireland with all the miseries of war and oppression. Con had a mixture of vices and virtues in his composition; and perhaps that the latter would have shone with a brilliancy, in which the former would have been lost, if ambition did not "congeal the genial current of his soul." His whole life was engrossed in the cares of war, so that he had no opportunity of conferring the benefits of peace on the nation.

Few of our princes excelled him in intrepidity and the greatness of true heroism. Con, of the hundred battles, has been the popular and inspiring theme on which Irish poetry and eloquence have lavished all their genius. His very name had a talismanic effect, which existed in the potency of its charm, until the days of Queen Elizabeth, in inspiring the valour and patriotism of the Irish.

"Remember," said the gallant Phelim O'Neil, to his soldiers, as he led them against his English foes, "that the spirit of Con of the hundred battles, is watching our conduct to-day. His blood is in our veins, let us show the world that his courage is, also, in our hearts!"

CHAPTER XXVI.

Conaire, the son of Mogha-Lamha, is elected monarch by the national estates.—His three sons are exalted to principalities.—O'ioll, king of Munster, demands the Leinster tribute.—Events of Conaire's reign, and his death.—Art, the son of Con of the hundred battles, elected monarch.—His death at the battle of Muicrumhe.—Scotland colonized by prince Carbre Riada.

ON the death of the monarch Con, as related in the last chapter, the national representatives assembled at Tara to elect a successor to the throne. After the usual contest, Conaire, the son of Mogha-Lamha, the lineal descendant of Conaire the Great, of the Deguids of Munster, and royal dynasty of Heremon, was declared monarch of Ireland by a majority of suffrages. On the day of his coronation he espoused Seraid, the second daughter of Con, a great and advantageous alliance that secured many friends to his party. The first years of his reign were devoted to the internal improvement of the kingdom, and to the reformation of the laws, as well as to other necessary regulations in the state. At this epoch, A. D. 192, like

several of their generatorial ancestors, the Britons solicited the aid of the Irish monarch against the Emperor Severus, whose legions were overrunning their country. Conaire, who was ambitious and passionately emulous of military glory, resolved to raise an adequate force, and march against the Romans in person. The most active preparations were set on foot, every provincial prince was called upon for his quota of troops for the expedition to Britain.

Prior to the king's departure, however, he summoned the national convention, for the purpose of suggesting to them his plan of providing for the succession of his own family, and the exclusion of the Heberians from the throne. He had now three sons almost grown up to manhood,—youths of genius and courage, to each of whom he assigned principalities; the first, called *Carbre Muse*, was invested with the sovereignty of Muskerry, in the county of Cork;—the second, whose name was *Carbre Baisean*, was appointed over the territory of Corca Bhascain, in the county of Clare, and the third, *Carbre Riada*, had, for his dominion, all the lands lying around Loch-Lene, in the county of Kerry. About this period, Tiobradh, king of Ulster, died. As soon as the monarch heard of the event, he resorted to every species of intrigue to raise a branch of his own family to the vacant throne. His policy and address accomplished his plan; for *Fiatach*, a Heremonian prince, was called to the throne of Ulster. Conaire having now nothing to dread from internal revolt, as the kings of Munster and Ulster were his relatives, and devoted vassals, gave orders to his troops to march to the point of embarkation for Britain. But in his progress to the coast he was basely assassinated by Neimhidh, a prince of his own blood, who was led to the commission of the atrocious deed by a criminal passion which he had for many years cherished for *Seraid*, the Queen. At this juncture, Olioll, son of the great Eogan, was crowned king of Munster, and to him the three sons of Conaire applied for assistance to punish the murderer of their father.

The regicide became an object of the vengeance of national indignation. The three sons of Conaire, as well as Olioll, who had been just called to the throne of Munster, on the death of the Regent, Mac Niad, pursued Neimhidh into Leinster, where, at the battle of *Cinnefcabha*, his forces were destroyed, and himself slain, A. D. 192. At this engagement, Mac Con, the son of Mac Niad, by the daughter of Con of the hundred battles, fought against the Carbres, and Olioll, who had lately married his mother. The national estates were again convened to elect a new monarch in the room of Conaire. The sons of the late monarch, as well as Olioll, king of Munster, and Fiatach, king of Ulster, unanimously agreed to favour the pretensions of Art, the son of Con, to the supreme sovereignty. By a private treaty of compact between these allied sovereigns, it was covenanted that the youngest son of Conaire, called *Carbre Riada*, should reign in *Albania*, (Scotland) and also receive a cession of territory in Ulster, through which he might receive supplies of men and arms to maintain his power in that country. The portion of Ulster, thus ceded, comprehending the county of Antrim, and part of Down, is called to this day, "*Dal Riada*," or the route of

Prince Riada.* As soon as this treaty was ratified, Olioll published a decree declaring his step-son, Lughdheach, or Mac Con, a rebel and a traitor, and commanding him, on pain of death, to abandon the territory of Munster. Meanwhile, Art was elected monarch of Ireland. Mac Con, who was his nephew, fled to Tara, to seek protection from the monarch; but his reception by Art, who was under many deep obligations of gratitude to his brother-in-law, Olioll, was cool and mortifying.

Provoked at this treatment, received at the hands of his uncle, Mac Con, and Lugh-Leagha, the rebel brother of Olioll, fled to Scotland, in the hopes of finding an asylum at the court of Carbre Riada. But no sooner did they reach the Albanian shore, than they received orders to quit the country without delay. They then directed their steps to South Britain, where they met with better success. The king of Wales, pitying their deplorable distress, resolved not only to afford them a place of refuge, but to supply them with forces to invade Ireland. Mac Con, assured of the friendship of the Welsh king, passed over to Gaul, where he had patrimonial possessions. Here, by his address and specious representations, he succeeded in raising a considerable force, with which he returned to Wales. On his arrival, he saw around his standard, an army whose number and disposition filled him with the most sanguine hope of achieving the conquest of Ireland. The Welsh king, to evince how hearty he was in the cause, sent his son, Beine Breat, with Mac Con, to Ireland.

This expedition landed in the port of Galway, where Mac Con entrenched his army. Here a council of war was held, at which, it was resolved to send ambassadors to Art to insist on the cession of Leath-Mogha, or the southern half of Ireland. The personages sent on this embassy were Lugh-Leagha, the brother of Olioll, and his preceptor, Nuadh, the Druid. Their instructions were, that if the monarch refused to conform to their demands, to declare war immediately against him. When they arrived at Tara, they made known to Art the purpose of their mission. The monarch, enraged at the audacity of their requisitions, boldly told them, "that he would never consent to their proposals; that he was unworthy a crown who declined fighting for it,—that it was through rivers of blood his father waded to the sovereignty;—and that he would meet Mac Con, with his foreign mercenaries, in the field of war, where the sword would be the arbitrator of their disputes."

When the ambassadors heard this declaration, they requested of the monarch to name the time and place of battle. Art said, that as Mac Con had stolen into his kingdom, at the head of foreigners, without giving him the slightest notice, he, therefore, considered that he should be allowed a year for organizing his army, and

* Though since the days of Heremon, Albania, or Scotland, was partially subject to Ireland, still it was Carbre Riada, who first became a kind of an independent monarch in the country.—*Chronicle of Eri.*

"The country became a complete Irish colony, and Carbre Riada, a very enterprising Prince of the Deaghadh of Munster, and son of Conary II. the monarch of Ireland. This establishment of Scots (Irish) in North Britain, took the name of *Dal-Riada* from prince Eochaidh Riada (the great progenitor of the Mac-Keoghs) the founder of it."—*Disser. on Irish History.*

making the necessary preparations for a conflict that should decide the fate of Ireland. But to the required prolongation of the time of battle, the ambassadors resolutely refused assent. They alleged that the forces of Mac Con were only enlisted for a certain period, and that its expiration was nearly at hand; consequently, the battle must take place immediately. Art, finding that he could not procure a delay, agreed to try his power with Mac Con, on the plains of *Muigh Cruimhe*,* in the space of fourteen days. With this answer the ambassadors returned to the camp of Mac Con. Art, in order to profit as much as possible by the short period that intervened the approaching battle, despatched envoys to the provincial kings, to solicit their contingents of troops. The king of Munster sent a large force, commanded by his nineteen sons, to the army of the monarch. The king of Connaught, with the Clana-Morni, likewise joined him. To multiply his hosts still farther, Art proceeded himself to *Killeen*, in Leinster,† the seat of the famous *Fion Mac Cumhal*, (the Fingal of Macpherson) to solicit his aid, and that of his brave Irish militia, in the coming conflict. Fion, aware of the approach of the monarch, and the purpose of his visit, retired in the night, with the Leinster knights, from his residence. When Art reached Fion's palace, he asked his chief judge (*Reachtair*) where the chief was? The judge told the king, in reply, that the champion had entered into a stipulation not to combat against Mac Con.

This answer irritated and disappointed Art, as he had reason to calculate on the gratitude of the general, and expect the most signal services from his valour, and the courage of his army. After pronouncing a bitter imprecation on Fion, and reprobating his ingratitude, the monarch loudly exclaimed—"His military fame is disgraced by this base desertion from me, who was his best friend,—who was ever ready to comply with all his requests. I allowed his militia, cattle, clothes, and the privilege of quartering on my people, from November to May. To the hero himself, I gave money;—and at the last assembly at *Tailtean*, I presented to him fifty broad shining swords, fifty golden shields, and fifty polished spears. But I shall be revenged." He then returned to Tara, brooding resentment in his mind against Fion. He speedily marshalled his forces, with which he marched to the field appointed for the battle.

Mac Dairy's description of the battle of *Muigh Cruimhe*, in one of

* We cannot learn from either Keating, O'Flaherty, O'Halloran, or McDermott, in what part of Ireland *Muigh Cruimhe* is situated. We think, however, it must be either in the county of Roscommon, or Leitrim.—P.

† This place, which is now, as it has been, the residence of the Earl of Fingall's noble family, since the reign of Richard I. was the real *Selma* of the heroic father of our *Ossian*. Fingal commanded the knights of Leinster, and the best proof of his valour and power is the condescension of the monarch of Ireland, in paying him a visit for the purpose narrated in the text. Let it be remembered, that Macpherson, in order to give an air of truth to the fictions of his own visionary brain, makes Fion Mac Cumhal, a cotemporary of Cuchullin, although that hero died nearly three centuries before the era of which we are writing. But as we are now approaching the age of Ossian, we shall, when we bring our history down to it, devote an entire chapter to the biography of our ancient Bard, and to the refutation of Macpherson's pretensions to the son of Fion Mac Cumhal.—P.

"This is the hero so much celebrated in the poems of Macpherson, corruptly called Fingal, and falsely said there to be a Caledonian chief."—WARNER.

his epic poems, displays great powers of genius. He says of Art—"Yonder he sweeps over the plain, like the thunderbolt that tumbles down the rocks into the foaming main. How majestic is the step of the kingly hero,—how worthy of his great sire, the hero of the hundred battles! Look how the brightness of his sword contends with the sun-beam in refulgence—how the gleaming of his spear illuminates the sides of the mountain!

This hero of Tara is like the irresistible wave in his enmity;—he is as quick as lightning in defence, terrible in battle; the support of mighty armies—the hand of liberality,—the all-protecting, and the performer of most mighty deeds.

Contending armies behold with dismay and admiration his warrior-like anger; dreadful to their ears is his powerful voice, as he calls his valiant soldiers to the point where danger and death stalk through the conflict. His foes shrink before him as the ripe harvest bends before the storm, they fall to rise no more."

Olioll is also represented performing the most gigantic feats of heroism in this memorable engagement, which was fought, A. D. 222. Perhaps among all the battles which we have narrated, in the course of this history, that we may estimate this the most sanguinary and destructive that had been fought since the reign of Heremon.

The rank and number of the slain demonstrate how desperately and vindictively it was contested. Art, the monarch, after performing the most glorious exploits, at length fell by the hand of Lughaleagha. Eogan, the crown prince of Munster, and six of his legitimate brothers, with the king of Connaught and two of his sons, were among the slain, so that Mac Con purchased the victory dearly.* "History," says O'Halloran, "scarcely furnishes a more unnatural war than the one between Art and his nephew, Mac Con. The latter dethroning his uncle, and fighting against his step-father, Olioll, as well as his brothers. Lughaleagha quitting the party of his brother, Olioll, to fight for his nephew; and to add to the disgrace of these times, the brothers of Con killing their two nephews."

While these lamentable events were passing in Ireland, Carbre Riada,† was employed in strengthening his power in Caledonia, and in combating with the Roman legions.

* "Seven of the nine legitimate sons of Olioll, were unfortunately killed in the battle of Muchruimo, as the king of Munster has confirmed in a poem composed by himself.—'The tender father for his sons laments;—Seven princes, the only hopes of my old age, fell in one day:—Eogan, Dumberchon, Modehorb, Lughaidh, Eochaidh, and *Diothorda*.'"—KEATING.

† "By force or friendship, the Irish prince procured settlements for himself and his followers in Scotland. From this leader, whose name was *Riada*, the posterity of these settlers are to this day called *Dal Reudimh*, or the Irish occupiers of the part."—BEDE.

"It is true, that before this time, the Albanian Picts were, for centuries, tributary to the crown of Ireland, yet it remained for Carbre to form the first regular settlement in Scotland."—*Mac Geoghegan's Hist. d'Irlande*.

"This Prince reduced all Scotland under his dominion."—*Usher's Primord*.

"How can the Caledonians, in the face of the authorities of Bede and Fordun, have the egregious folly to deny their Irish origin."—*O'Kennedy's Chronology*.—*Edinburgh, 1778*.

The disaster of the battle of Muigh Cruimhe, and the death of his seven beloved sons, rendered Olioll, king of Munster, inconsolable. The agony of his affliction became too acute to be borne with fortitude or resignation. He mourned his eldest son, Eogan, with constant tears, and piteous wailings. The weight of his wo, and the pain of his affliction soon depressed his spirits and destroyed his health. Finding his infirmities and sorrows rapidly bearing him into the whirlpool of death, he made his will, by which he bequeathed to his son, *Cormac-Cas*, or the beloved, the crown of Munster during his life, as well as his sword, shield, spear, and suit of armour. "These," said he, "I leave him as a token of my affection, and a proof of the estimate I set on his courage and bravery." This will stipulated, that after the death of Cormac, the crown should devolve on Eogan, the infant son of the crown prince, Eogan-Olioll, who fell in the late battle. It further ordained that the sovereignty should for ever continue in alternate succession between the issue of Cormac and his nephew *Eogan Fiachadh*. After he had signed this testament, he called his son and grand-son to his bed-side, when he bestowed upon them his benediction, and then conjured them, in the most earnest manner, to observe religiously, the commands of his will, which he told them, would make them the delight of their friends, and the terror of their enemies. Soon after delivering this injunction, he breathed his last.

From Cormac Cas and Eogan Fiachadh were descended some of the noblest families that shine in the Irish annals,—names that fling a radiance of exalted virtue and martial renown on the page which they adorn.

The posterity of Olioll-Olum,* transmitted through these two princes, was designated by the Irish historian, the clan *Eoganaechs*, and clan Cassians. From Eogan are descended the following Septs:—The Mac Carthies,† O'Connells, Callaghans, O'Sullivans, O'Keefs, O'Donohoes, O'Mahonies, O'Donovans, Mac Auliffe, O'Shee, O'Line, Mac Gilduddy, O'Garas, &c. &c.

The posterity of Cormac Cas, are:—The O'Briens, Mac Namaras,

* "The reason he got the epithet of *Olum* is this;—being of a very amorous disposition, he once attempted violence on a young lady, named *Aithne*; but she, enraged at his insolence, in her struggles, bit off a piece of his ear."—O'HALLORAN.

† The Mac Carthies, called by way of eminent distinction, Mac Carthy More, or the Great, were, for many ages, kings of Desmond, a principality comprehending the counties of Cork and Kerry. The English followers of king John deprived them of a large portion of their patrimonial possessions. A branch of this illustrious family were created by Richard I. Earl of Clancarthy, a title which they held until the reign of William III., when, like many other noble Irish families, they became the victims of confiscation and forfeiture. The Trench family possesses now this peerage.—P.

"Of the race of Eogan More, the Mac Carthies were the first, and the greatest, the oldest Milesian family in Ireland, and one of the most celebrated. Out of the wrecks of time and fortune, Donogh, the late Earl of Clancarthy, had reserved in his family an estate of ten or twelve thousand pounds a year; a fair possession of more than two thousand years standing; the oldest, perhaps, in the world; but forfeited for his loyalty and devotion to the Stuart family."—O'CONNOR.

"Patrick Mac Carthy, Earl of Clancarthy, sat in king James's parliament, in 1689, for which he was attainted."—TAAFFE.

Mac Mahons, Kennedies, Mac Clanchies, Mac Cochlins, O'Hiffernans, O'Carrolls, Princes of Ely and Louth; O'Riardans, O'Flanagans, O'Haras, O'Fogertys, O'Maras, O'Machair, O'Caseys, O'Flynn, &c. &c.

"By the terms of this will," observes O'Halloran, "when the crown of Leath-Mogha came to the issue of Eogan, the other family were kings of North Munster only; and when these last succeeded, the other family were kings only of South Munster, Leath-Mogha, including the command of the entire province."

CHAPTER XXVII.

The accession of Mac Con to the throne of Ireland, and of Cormac-Cas to that of Munster.—The exploits of Cormac in Britain and Ireland.—Death of Cormac-Cas.—Cormac Mac Art fomented an insurrection against Mac Con.—Its consequences.—Mac Con assassinated.—Accession of Feargus to the Irish throne.—His death.—Cormac ascends the throne.

THE late decisive victory opened the way for Mac Con to the Irish throne, of which he took possession without further molestation. At his inauguration he assumed the name of LUGHAIÐH III. Our annals say but little of his exploits after his accession, or of the events that occurred in the course of his reign. Dr. O'Halloran mentions, indeed, that it is recorded in the book of the Lecan, of his having effected extensive conquests in Britain and Gaul. This monarch was descended from Ith, the nephew of Milesius, and first cousin to Heber and Heremon, the first Milesian kings of the island. It is extremely probable that he possessed some territory in Scotland, as some of the noblest families there, such as the Campbells, Allans, and others equally ancient, derive their origin from this Mac Con, who was the third Irish sovereign of the dynasty of Ith. The O'Driscols, O'Learys, O'Kellys, O'Bernes, O'Breogans, and Mac Flanchys, very old and respectable Irish Septs, claim the honour of being the posterity of Lughaidh.

In virtue of his father's will, Cormac succeeded to the throne of Munster, where he soon displayed the capacity of the legislative king, and the consummate ability of the skilful general. His soldiers were the best disciplined and armed body of men in Ireland, over whom he appointed his son-in-law,* the famous Fingal, commander

* Dr. O'Halloran, through error, stated in his history, that Cormac married "*Samhair*, daughter to the celebrated general Fion, the son of Cumhal." Mr O'Halloran's assertion cannot be sustained by any authority against the united testimony of O'Flaherty, Keating, McDermott and Warner, and though last, not least, the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Dublin*, where one of the learned writers says, in speaking of Fion Mac Cumhal, "he was the son of Cumhal," and styled by us, his countrymen—"Finn, the renowned general in chief of the Irish Militia. His mother, Murin, daughter of Thady, the son of *Nuadh*, known by the name of the White Monarch of Ireland. He was son-in-law of king Cormac, the son of Olioll More, and grand-son of Con of the hundred battles. His two

in chief. The king reposed the greatest confidence in the wisdom, prudence, and military talent of Fingal, so that he was the monarch's associate in council, in studies, and marshal achievements. The gallant son of Cumhal was not more valiant than he was accomplished, as his mind was richly endowed with every liberal art, and science prevailing in the age in which he lived. By the daughter of Cormac he had two sons, the famous Ossian, and Fergus, who have acquired such immortal renown by their feats of arms, and their exercise of poetic genius. There are but few of our princes more celebrated than king Cormac Cas, for his daring courage, extensive literary attainments, political sagacity, and sage jurisprudence. His intrepid chivalry was always conspicuous in the throng of the battle. As a poet, notwithstanding his passion for arms, he ranked high, so much so, that he obtained the estimation of a prophet.* He was the first prince of Munster that established an annual payment on every first day of November, of his royal revenue.

The army and general of Cormac had the tendency of keeping the other Irish princes in awe and fear, and his power gave often, it must be allowed, insolence to his ambition, which was extravagant. By threats, he compelled the people of Leinster to pay him tribute, and the inhabitants of Connaught, after trying the issue of two battles, in which they were defeated by Fion, had to submit to Cormac, and pour into his coffers the impost which he had demanded. The monarch, Mac Con, beheld these proceedings with much secret anger and jealousy; but he was not at all in a situation to wage a war with his step-brother.

Not content with domestic conquests, Cormac invaded Wales, in order to gratify the vengeance which he had long cherished against the government and people of that country, for the assistance which they had afforded Mac Con, when he was banished thence, by his father, Olioll. After ravaging the country, and enriching himself with spoils and contributions, he returned to his palace at Cashel. Here he was not long suffered to enjoy repose; for a branch of the Damnonii revolted in South Munster, against whom he took the field, and quickly succeeded in reducing them to subjection; just as their allies, the Ultonians, and the Fionna Erion, commanded by the king of Ulster, were at hand to afford them succour. Against these, Cormac marched, and in their retreat, which they commenced as soon as they heard of the victory over the Damnonii, brought them to an engagement in Meath, where the heroic

sons, Oisín (the Ossian of Mac Pherson) and Fergus, by the Irish princess, were renowned in arts and arms. Fergus *Findheoil*, or fair lips, figuratively meaning of sublime diction, has been emphatically styled "the philosophic poet of pointed expression."

"That great body of heroes, the Irish Militia, was commanded by *Finn*, the gallant son of Cuínhal, who was married to the daughter of king Cormac Cas."—WARNER.

* "This great monarch was transcendentally pre-eminent above all others, in the third century, for his profound knowledge in the antiquity and jurisprudence of his country;—the schools he endowed, the books he composed, the laws he established, bear unquestionable testimony of his munificence, wisdom, and learning."—McELLIOTT.

monarch slew the king of Ulster with his own hand ; but in the desperate struggle, he was mortally wounded himself, and he fell on the body of his brave antagonist. Thus was ended the glorious reign of Cormac Cas, as gallant and magnanimous a prince as ever adorned the throne of Munster. "The issue of Cormac Cas, by his Queen, a Danish Princess," says Dr. O'Halloran, "were Moghcorb, Aoif, and Eadhoin."

King Cormac was a munificent patron of the artists and poets of his country, as the Psalter of Cashel asserts, that he often bestowed, in one day, three hundred ounces of silver to the Bards and literati at his court.

At this time, A. D. 234, Cormac, the son of Art, the monarch of Ireland, who was killed by Mac Con, at the battle of *Muigh Cruimhe*, became very popular with the Irish nation, in consequence of his various accomplishments, and the valour that distinguished his martial exploits in the wars of his cousin Cormac Cas. Prepossessing in appearance, elegant in manners, and enlightened by a finished education, the Irish people unanimously wished to see him elevated to the throne of Heremon, which was now filled by a usurper of the line of Ith. Thus fostered and encouraged by national partiality, he resolved to make a gallant struggle to wrest the crown from the brows of Mac Con, as well as to avenge the death of his father. Supported by strong parties in Connaught and Munster, he publicly avowed his intention of dethroning the reigning king.

His eloquence and insinuating manners seduced many of the former adherents of Mac Con to his cause. With a splendid retinue of knights, Druids and warriors, he payed a visit of congratulation to his cousin, *Fiacha Muilcathan*, who had just succeeded, in conformity to the will of his grand-father, Olioll, to the throne of Munster, on the death of his uncle, Cormac Cas. Both these princes became attached to each other by a stronger tie than even that of relationship ;—the sympathy which springs from a community of feeling and interest, and a cherished desire of being revenged on a common enemy ; for both their fathers, Art and Eogan, were killed, when fighting side by side, at the battle of *Muigh Cruimhe*, against Mac Con. From Cashel, Cormac repaired to the court of Emania to solicit his relation, king Fergus, and the knights of the red branch, to enlist under his standard ;—and after partly gaining his object in Ulster, he then journeyed to Connaught, where the brave Clana-Morni pledged themselves to support his pretensions. When the note of this mighty preparation reached the monarch's ears, it struck apprehension into his very heart ; for the black storm he saw gathering round him portended direful destruction to himself and his race. Rousing from the indolence in which he had for some years loitered, he proceeded to establish such measures as might contravene and frustrate the threatened attack of his competitor. To recruit his army, naturally became the first object of his solicitude. He summoned the provincial kings to his standard ; and for the purpose of inducing his relatives in Munster to espouse his cause, he made a journey into that province. But the king, *Fiacha*, burning with vengeance against Mac Con, for the death of his father, not only refused him

the rites of hospitality, but commanded him on pain of seizure, to depart from his territories in twenty-four hours. Thus mortified and insulted, he had to retrace his steps back to Tara, but while on his journey he was treacherously slain by *Comain Eigis*, in the county of Meath, in the thirtieth year of his reign.* There is little doubt but the assassin was urged and instigated to the commission of the atrocious deed by prince Cormac.

Though Mac Con gained the throne by the sword, yet his reign was disgraced by no tyrannic act. Our historians say that he was a liberal friend to poets and artists, and that at the period of his murder, he was engaged in rewarding his Bards and antiquaries with presents of gold and silver.† Cormac, on hearing of the death of Con, was certain of being elected monarch of Ireland by the national estates, and in this hope he proceeded to Ulster, where, to increase his popularity, he invited all the princes and nobility of the province to a sumptuous entertainment. In the midst of the revels of this banquet, when wine subdued the mental and physical energies of Cormac, Fergus, king of Ulster, who secretly aspired to the Irish crown, set the long flowing hair of his rival on fire, which was instantly consumed, and thus deprived him of being a candidate, as he expected for the monarchy; for our ancient princes valued themselves on the length and luxuriance of their hair, which was deemed so indispensable an ornament, that no prince could aspire to sovereignty who was divested of it.‡ Thus insulted and disgraced, Cormac was rendered incapable of presenting himself at Tara as a candidate; so that Fergus succeeded in gaining the suffrages of the electors, by which he ascended the summit of his ambition—the Irish throne. Fergus was the grandson of Ogaman, a prince of the house of Heremon, whom, it will be recollected, Conaire II. raised to the regal authority in Ulster.

Cormac retired to some solitude, as he could not consistent with dignity, appear in public with a bald head, until his hair grew to its natural length, when he went among his friends and proclaimed the wrongs and insults he suffered at the hands of Fergus. Fiacha, king of Munster, Tiege, prince of Ely, Lugh-Leagha, his grand-uncle, declared that they would aid him in carrying on a war of

* "The place of his death, near to the river Boyne, is known to this day by the name of "*Goit an oir*," or the golden field; which title is received, because Mac Con, when he was slain, was distributing his liberality, and rewarding the merit of poets and artists with large sums of money."—KEATING.

† "Mr. O'Flaherty allows to Mac Con but a reign of three years; but in this, as well as in many other instances of chronology, he opposes the voice of truth and antiquity: for nothing is more certain, that both his successor Cormac, as well as his contemporary Fiacha, king of Munster, were not born for some days after the battle of Muicruimhe:—so that this circulation Cormac must have been called to the throne at four years old; and that in a country where no one was capable of filling any public office until after twenty-five years of age."—O'HALLORAN.

‡ "Not only every prince, but even every knight of Ireland, was obliged to be perfect in all his limbs, so that his very person might command respect. Fine hair graced all these perfections, and set them off with dignity and comeliness."—McDERMOTT.

"To cut off the hair of an adversary, was a mark of the highest contempt; nor dare he appear abroad with such a degrading mark of infamy as a bald head."—O'FLAHERTY.

vengeance against the monarch. A mighty army is speedily raised, and Cormac, in the short space of thirty days, saw his banners waving over the heads of fifty thousand men, commanded by thirty princes, and fifty great captains. With this grand and powerful army, he carries terror and devastation to the plains of Criona, where he was stopped by Fergus, to try the fortune of a battle.

This battle, so fierce and terrible, was fought, A. D. 254. The hostile legions encountered each other with the most inveterate rancour and fury. Lugha-Leagha clove down all that opposed him; his arm was like the red thunder-bolt cleaving through the summer forest, as it paved its way through hostile ranks. Both armies stood, for a time motionless, in astonishment, beholding his invincible bravery as he rushed through steel-bristled soldiers to seek distinguished enemies worthy of his sword. *Folt-Eabhair*, one of the brothers of Fergus, was the first prince that essayed to stop his death-spreading course; but the spear of Lugha speedily drank his heart's blood. His brother *Chaisfhiacloch*, or of the crooked teeth, seeing his beloved Eabhair fall, rushed on the enraged hero to avenge Folt, but he found his fate on the point of his spear. He now, like a hungry lion, trampling on crawling reptiles, bore down all that endeavored to arrest his overwhelming career, in pursuit of the king, whom he attacked in the midst of his guards, slew him, and then cut off his head, which he brought to Cormac, with those of Fergus's two brothers, as trophies of his victory. The royal army seeing the monarch and all their chiefs slain, began to give ground; but in their retreat they were encouraged by the Ultonians to rally and to continue the desperate conflict, until Tiege, or Thady, with a fresh body of troops, fell on the gallant Ultonians, and thus decided a glorious victory for Cormac. Mostly all the officers of rank in Cormac's army were severely wounded. Tiege was pierced by a spear in three parts of his body, from which there issued so profuse a quantity of blood, as reduced him to such feebleness, that his attendants were obliged to carry him to Tara, in a litter. Here the hero languished in great torment, until his friend Lugha, brought to him from Munster a celebrated surgeon, called Finighin, who extracted from the wounds a peace of a spear, and the barbed point of an arrow, which operation quickly alleviated Tiege's agony, and divested him of all pain. DR. KEATING tells an incredible story of the cause of the virulence of Thady's wounds, which we merely transcribe for its absurdity and improbability. "As the valiant Thady was lying convenient to the field of battle, grievously wounded, Cormac came to the place, and perceiving Thady in that miserable condition, by the pain of his wounds, called to a surgeon who was in his company, and with the most barbarous design, commanded him, under the pretence of dressing one of the wounds, to convey an ear of barley into it; into the second wound he ordered him to inclose a small black worm; and in the third, he was to conceal the point of a rusty spear; and then he was to take care, in the administering of his medicines, that the wounds should seemingly be cured; but they were not to be searched to the bottom, in order to give him the more pain, and by degrees to affect his life." It were impossible,

for a moment, to suppose, that a gallant and generous prince, as Cormac certainly was, could have acted the part of such a monster of cruelty, perfidy, and ingratitude, towards the brave man, who contributed so effectually in vanquishing his enemies, and thus opening for him a road to supreme power. But as the horrid tale is neither found in O'Flaherty, Molloy, nor the Psalter of Cashel, we may regard it as one of those ridiculous fictions with which Keating's history is fraught, until it overflows with legendary nonsense, that every acute and discriminating Irishman must reprobate for folly and absurdity. Keating was certainly very learned, but he was too extensive a dealer in chimeras, and was unfortunately, for his credit as a historian, ever ready to retail out the traditionary stories of superstitious old chroniclers with whom Ireland, in his day, abounded.

Cormac's coronation at Tara, after his great victory, was distinguished by an unusual degree of pomp, magnificence, and pageantry, in order to give an imposing eclat to the solemnity. More than one hundred Druids assisted, we are told, in the splendid and affecting ceremonial of his inauguration, on the stone of destiny. This memorable event occurred, according to our most creditable annalists, A. D. 255.

The greatness and glory which Cormac was destined to attain as a monarch and a conqueror, were, we are told, predicted by the Druids at his birth;—and even before he was born, the night preceding the sanguinary battle of Muigh Cruimhe, his mother, the Queen of Art, awoke affrighted from a fearful dream which she had. The king, perceiving her perturbation, solicited her to detail to him the particulars of her vision, as his knowledge of Druidical divination would enable him to unfold the mystic secrets that lay enveloped in the tangled web of futurity. She, in conformity to his request, gave him the following relation of it, which we give in the words of the Translator of O'Flaherty:—

“Methought, said she, that my head was taken off, and from my neck sprung up a large tree, whose extended branches covered the whole kingdom. This tree was destroyed by a swelling sea; but from its roots arose another, larger and more flourishing than the former, which was withered, in full bloom, by the blasts of a westerly wind.” Art, who was well skilled in the prescient mysteries of the Druids, explained his wife's dream in this interpretation. “This dream,” my love, said he, “bodes ill to me, but it presages glory for our posterity; Your head being cut off, denotes my death in the battle to-morrow; for the head of every woman is her husband. The tree that arose from your neck, imports that you will bear a son for me, after my death, who will arise at great power and dignity, and rule as supreme monarch of Ireland: this tree being carried away by the sea, signifies the loss of his life through the means of that element. The second tree, proceeding from the roots of the former, and still more flourishing, foretels a successor to him, who will arrive at still greater power; but the tree being destroyed by a westerly wind, declares he will fall by the hands of the *Fianna Eirion*, or the Irish militia. But they themselves shall be also

destroyed in that battle, never after to arise to annoy the royal race of Heremon."

It is a historical fact, sustained by the concurrent testimony of all our annalists, that king Arthur's prediction, given in the elucidation of his Queen's dream, was virtually verified by the actual occurrence of the prognosticated events.

Art, the next morning after his wife's dream, was killed in the battle, by Lugh-Leagha. His son, Cormac, who, after wading through oceans of difficulties and blood, mounted the throne, and became a powerful monarch, at length lost his life, as O'Halloran tells us, "by the bone of a salmon crossing the *æsophagus*, whilst at dinner." His gallant son Carbre, as will be seen in a future chapter of this history, reached great glory and grandeur as monarch of Ireland; but in fulfilment of his grand-father's prophecy, he was killed at the battle of Gabhra, fought, A. D. 280, after annihilating the *Fianna Eirion*, or Irish militia.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

The reign of Cormac—the grandeur of his court, and the excellence of his institutions. He punishes the ravishers of the Vestals of the Moon—and causes the palace of Tara to be enlarged and beautified.—Reduces Leinster and imposes an annual tribute on that province.—Appoints Fion Mac Cumhal generalissimo of the Irish army in Albany.—Fion's character of the Irish ladies.—Cormac demands tribute from Munster.

CORMAC having, as already related, gained the summit of regal power, formed the noble and patriotic resolution of exerting his talents and authority for the welfare of his people. He, animated with this spirit, reformed the laws, so as to make them accord with the wishes of the nation, and introduced other changes in the state, of a highly beneficial character.* The history of the country from

* "He applied himself with great assiduity to revise the ancient laws of the kingdom; that he might abolish those which were inconvenient or absurd, retain those which were useful, and establish others which were accommodated to the temper and genius of the people he was to govern. This is a lesson to princes and states of modern times, which, as they are more enlightened, it is shameful that they are yet to learn:—and it shows either want of spirit, want of attention, or want of genius in the prince and people, to be governed by laws and customs, introduced so many hundred years ago, that they are become useless, inconvenient, and the meaning of them being not understood, ridiculous. The Irish monarch had too much wisdom and resolution to permit laws and customs to have authority, merely because they had been such: unless they were still of use, and adapted to the manners of the age he lived in. Therefore, like a true friend to his country, he meditated and effected such alterations in its laws and customs, as the nature of the constitution, and the circumstances of the times required. The ordinances, which he established for the public good, which are yet to be seen in the old Irish records, and which show his great skill in the laws and antiquities of his country, were never abolished whilst the Irish regal government had existence."—WARNER.

"This royal civilian, reduced the laws into axioms, which, like those of old Roynays, obtained the title of *Breatha-Nimhe*, or celestial judgments. These were deemed to have been composed with so much equity and wisdom, as to merit the approbation of heaven, and to be consequently unalterable. In the times of

the reign of his illustrious predecessor, *Ollamh Fodhla*, was by his orders submitted to the supervision of the whole body of the Irish Literati. He summoned all the Druids of his kingdom to Tara, in order that they should, in full convocation, make an inquiry into the state of religion, and establish such ordinances as might be conducive to the promotion of national virtue and morality.

"Hence in old writings," says O'Halloran, "We find him proclaimed, *Budhrigh, budhphaidh, budh ecean acaoimh-fine*," which in English is:—He was the good king, the pious divine, and the learned philosopher, as well as the noble chief of the brave military bands of Ireland. After having made the reformation in church and state, which he thought the interests of the country required, he employed architects and artists of eminent skill to enlarge and embellish the palace of Tara. While these improvements were going on, he resided at *Miodh-Cuarta*, in West Meath, where the court and national assembly were removed. "This country palace," says Keating, "though far inferior to the royal palace of Tara, was 300 cubits in length, and 50 in breadth, and thirty in height; a marble dome or lantern, sprung from the centre of the edifice, which enlightened the state chamber. There were besides the apartments of the king, queen, princes, and nobility of the kingdom, 150 bed chambers for the accommodation of strangers." The magnificence and hospitality of king Cormac, surpassed in splendor and profusion those of any other Irish monarch famed in our annals. His court exhibited pomp and plenty, under their most imposing aspects. Exclusive of his own family, and the families and retinues of the provincial princes, there were more than fifteen hundred other persons feasted at his tables daily. At state dinners, the king was attended by one hundred and fifty knights of noble blood, and his household guard, were never less in number than eleven hundred soldiers. All the utensils and vessels used at the royal table were, we are told, of pure gold. No Irish prince ever lived in such a style of superb grandeur as Cormac, which rendered his name and hospitality so famous, and so lauded throughout Europe.* The

Christianity, likewise several eminent civilians compiled into one body, the celestial judgments of the ancients, and added some of their own. Dubhach O'Lughair, in the time of St. Patrick, Shenahan, the three brothers, Faranan, Bæthgal and Maeltuile, distinguished civilians of the eighth century, and several others. Duaid Mac Ferbis, the most learned antiquarian of latter times, was possessed of a considerable number of the *Brcatha-Nimhe*. He alone could explain them; as he alone, without patronage or assistance, entered into the depths of this part of our ancient literature, so extremely obscure to us of the present age. When we mention Mac Ferbis, we are equally grieved and ashamed; his great but neglected talents, ignominious to his ungrateful countrymen; his end tragical; his loss irreparable! This great man, who was assassinated by one of King William's troopers, while he was dying of hunger behind a hedge, wrote a commentary on *Fin Mac Cumhal's* version of celestial judgments."—*Disser. on the History of Ireland*.

* There never had been a monarch on the throne of Ireland who was attended by such a numerous retinue; the great guard, consisting of the flower of the Irish army, always on duty in the palace, and the other ensigns and distinctions of royalty which he had about him, which were equal to the dignity of the greatest princes at that time, made the court of this monarch the theme of universal fame. What added something to its lustre was his numerous issue; three sons of great renown in arms, and ten daughters of distinguished beauty and rare accomplishments."—WARNER.

poets extolled his generosity and munificence to the highest pitch of hyperbolic adulation; but Poets then, as well as now, were always ready to pay extravagant praise for racy wine and rare viands.

In addition to his other ordinances, he caused the national convention to enact a law, which would render it imperative on every future monarch of Ireland to retain in his court, a nobleman of Milesian blood as a companion, with whom he could converse freely and confidentially;—a learned and pious druid to administer to the spiritual wants of his conscience;—a chief judge to direct him in his judicial decisions;—a skilful physician to take charge of his health;—a poet to sing his exploits;—a musician to dissipate his melancholy by the charm of melody;—an antiquarian to explain historical mysteries, and read old inscriptions; and three faithful treasurers to collect his royal revenue. It is a historical fact, that all his successors, down to the dissolution of our regal government, in the twelfth century, appointed officers to fill the stations which we have enumerated. Under his munificent auspices, the university of Tara was extended, and several new professors added to the number prescribed by the laws of Ollamh Fodhla.

During the civil war waged between Cormac and Fergus, for the possession of the Irish throne, Dunluing, the prince royal of Leinster, and some of his companions, while inflamed with wine, killed the guards that protected the *Cluain Fear*t, or the retreat of the vestals of the moon, after which they forced their way into the sanctuary, violated the virgins, and then, with relentless cruelty, put them to the sword.

When Cormac ascended the throne, he caused an act of outlawry to be passed against the prince of Leinster, and his followers, for their horrible and barbarous deed. Dunluing, to evade the vengeance of justice, fled to Albania, where he stayed but a few years, when exile became so intolerable, that he resolved to revisit his native land, at any hazard.

The unfortunate prince, however, on his way to the palace of Ferns, was arrested, with twelve of his companions, at Armagh, and sent in chains to Tara, where the Brehons pronounced sentence of death against them. They were executed immediately after their trial.* The king not considering even death a sufficient expiation for the enormity of the crime, compelled the king of Leinster to send annually, during his life, as an eric, thirty white cows, with calves of the same colour, as well as brazen collars and silver bells, for their necks. Cormac having now established tranquillity, and a wholesome and equitable system of legislation in the country, felt himself at liberty to indulge his thirst for military renown in a foreign country. At this juncture, A. D. 258, the Dalriadian colony in Scotland, as tributaries of the Irish crown, implored aid from Cormac against the Roman legions, who then, by order of the emperor Valerian, made predatory incursions into their territories, and oppressed them most grievously. *Fingal* (as Macpherson

* “The punishment of death was inflicted on criminals by the sword, by the arrow, or by drowning. Hanging, the most ignominious of all deaths, was unknown in Ireland until after the English invasion.”—HUTCHINSON.

poetically styled him) had been in Caledonia with his militia, since the accession of Cormac, with whom he was on bad terms, but his force was so wasted by war and hardship, that he could no longer oppose the progress of the Romans. Though Cormac owed a grudge to Fion for deserting his father Art, in the hour of exigence, and for being the friend and ally of Mac Con, still he wished to conciliate the favor and friendship of the bravest, and most skilful general of the age; and for this purpose he honored him with the command of the troops which he sent to Scotland. When Fion received this reinforcement, he attacked the Romans in their entrenched camp, and compelled them to retreat into Britain, after having sustained immense losses in their flight.* It was during this campaign, so

* Mr. Laing, Pinkerton, Sir Walter Scott, the Edinburgh Reviewers, and the liberal and talented Sir James Macintosh, having given up their national claim and unfounded pretension to the honor of giving birth to Fion Mac Cumhal (Mr. Macpherson's utopian "King of Selma," or to his son *Ossin*, the immortal Irish Bard, renders it unnecessary for us to say much to prove a fact, on which the voice of Europe and America, has stamped the seal of TRUTH. It is, however, due from us to the memory of the late learned CHARLES O'CONNOR, of Ballenagar, to give some extracts from his conclusive arguments in refutation of Macpherson's allegations respecting the pretended poems of Ossian. Though Mr. O'Connor was not an eloquent writer, yet as a learned historian and a powerful logician, his pen, like the spear of *Carbre Riada*, prostrated all his Caledonian antagonists.—P.

Alluding to the Poems of Mr. Macpherson, Mr. O'Connor observes.—"He has lately published several poems, particularly those under the titles of *Fingal* and *Temora*, as translations from Ossian, whom he represents as a son of *Fingal*, who reigned in North Britain towards the close of the third century; a monarch by the way, unknown hitherto in all the records of Ireland and Scotland. As those Poems, however, retain the names of some men and places celebrated in the ancient history of Ireland, it is evident, that the translator points out to us *Oisín*, the son of Fion Mac Cumhal, the renowned commander of the Irish militia, who led the forces of king Cormac O'Con against the Romans.

To these poems, Mr. Macpherson has prefixed dissertations, filled with false etymologies, which show his ignorance in the Gaelic or Scotie, and with negative arguments, drawn chiefly from Innes, a priest of the Scottish College in Paris. In one and the other, he endeavors to discredit all the writings of our earlier Bards, to make room for *his* Ossian, whom he represents as an illiterate Poet of an illiterate age, and whose Poems escaped the search of the best critics of Scotland and Ireland for 1400 years, till the modern Columbanus made the discovery, and restored the true text of what was not, through a whole millenium, committed to writing.

Mr. Macpherson, like other travellers into unknown regions, not only indulges himself in the marvellous, but is audacious enough to think that he could impose on a learned age, what could not be tolerated in that of the greatest monastic credulity. He has discovered another monarchy of Scots in the highlands; such as neither Fordan, Innes, Buchanan, nor any other writer of North Britain, who ever published a page on Scottish affairs, could get the smallest glimpse of. Had the author of *Fingal* and *Temora* been an ancient, he would not omit celebrating the most noted names in Ireland, from the first to the fourth century, in which it is supposed *Fingal* died. He would not confound the times of Cuchullin with those of Fion Mac Cumhal; nor erect a castle in *Tara*, many ages before the natives built any. *Emania*, *Cruachan* and *Almhuin*, are not once mentioned in these poems; though the two first were the seats of the kings of Ulster and Connaught, and the last, Fion's own seat in Leinster. As a Poet, it must be confessed, that he merits our highest praises; as an historical guide, he is the blindest that any age ever produced. His chronological errors can be excelled only by such as are geographical; Teamore, near Dublin, in Meath, and the seat of the Irish monarchs, until the sixth century, he places in the province of Ulster. But Mr. Macpherson's historical, chronological, and genealogical, and topographical errors, have

glorious to the Irish arms, that Fingal discovered that his son, OSSIAN, who signalized his valor in several hard fought fields, in Caledonia, was attached to an Albanian princess, whom he wished to marry; but Fion opposed his objection to a matrimonial alliance with a foreigner. Baron Harold, in his elegant translation of our Irish Bard, gives us the following English version of Fingal's remonstrance with his son. "My son of the noble line of Heremorian heroes,—thou gallant descendant of Erin's kings—the down of youth grows on thy cheek—martial renown is loud in thy praise—Romans fear thee, their eagles were dazzled by the lightning of thy spear—they flew before thee, like timid birds before the hawks of Leinster. Is it in the morning of thy fame, bright with the sunbeams of martial glory, that thou wouldst ally thyself with the daughter of the Pict, and thus sully the royal purity of Milesian blood? Thy country is proud of thy exploits, and the royal virgins of Erin sigh for thy love, while Cormac's Bards sing of the deeds of thy bravery in the strife of the mighty. O! then, Ossian, of dulcet harmony, listen to the voice of thy father. Albanian maids are fair, but fairer and lovelier are the chaste daughters of thine own wave-washed Isle of wood-crested hills. Go to thy happy Isle,—to Branno's grass-covered field. Ever-Allen, the most brilliant gem in the diadem of female loveliness, the trembling dove of innocence, and the daughter of my friend, deserves thy attachment. The pure blood of Milesius glows in her guileless heart, and flows in her blue veins. Majestic beauty flows around her as a robe of light, and modesty, as a precious veil heightens her youthful charms. She is as lovely as the mountain flower when the ruddy beams of the rising sun gleam on its dew-gemmed side. Go, take thy arms, embark in yonder dark-bosomed ship, which will soon bear you over ocean's foam, to green Branno's streamy vales, where you will win a pure virgin heart, that never yet heaved with a sigh of love. For thee the vernal rose of passion will first effuse its sweetness through her sighs, and blush in all its beauty on her cheeks."

The revenues of Cormac, though immense, were still inadequate to meet the great expenditure which his munificent state and sumptuous hospitality required.

To supply his exhausted exchequer, he was ready to resort to any expedient, no matter how unjust, which his financial ministers might suggest. After thinking some time on the "ways and means" best calculated to extricate the king out of his pecuniary difficulties, they resolved to intimate to the monarch to demand a large arrear of tribute from Munster, which they persuaded him had been long due.

A pretext is enough for an ambitious conqueror to make war on his neighbors. Cormac, through his ambassadors, now imperiously required the people of Munster to be prompt in the payment of a tribute to which he asserted, that the compact entered into by Here-

been already sufficiently exposed to need further comment. His system has fallen to the ground, in spite of the defence of Blair and Sir George Mackenzie. Indeed, the Ossianic forgery is a womb teeming with inconsistencies and absurdities, which, like the children of sin, in the *Paradise Lost*, prey upon the bowels of their common mother."

mon and Heber, justly entitled him. The Mamonians boldly refused to comply with this requisition, and told Cormac's ambassadors that subsequent treaties of peace, particularly those between Con and Eogan-More and Con, and Mac Neidh, had completely abrogated and invalidated the grounds on which he rested his pretensions to the tribute. This prompt and peremptory negative to his requisition, kindled the monarch's resentment; and while yet smarting under the influence of his indignation, another event opportunely occurred, that still further augmented the fuel of his fury, and, in the opinion of the world, furnished him with new grounds of justification for his firm resolve of chastising the inhabitants of Munster. An officer of high rank happened, at this juncture, to fall under the king's displeasure, for some delinquency which our ancient annalists have omitted to mention. This fallen personage had powerful friends and relatives of high consideration, who interested themselves zealously in his behalf, and tried every effort of intercession to have him restored in the monarch's favor and confidence.

Amongst the number who thus endeavored to reinstate the obnoxious officer, in his former post, the most firm and influential intercessor was *Aongus*, the king's grand uncle.

This prince, who was brother of Con of the hundred battles, succeeded in obtaining an unqualified pardon for his friend. But as the aged prince and his *protegee*, on their return from the audience chamber, were rejoicing at their success, the latter was treacherously assailed by Cealagh, the monarch's son, and deprived of his eyes. This outrage, which was the effect of malice and jealousy, provoked the rage of Aongus, who, in the vehemence of his passion, pursued the young prince into the audience chamber, and killed him at the foot of his father's throne. The king shocked and horrified, hastily descended from his throne to arrest the slayer of his son; but the offender, flinging his spear at him, made such a precipitate retreat, that he gained the outside of the court portal, before the wounded monarch could give an intimation to the guards of what had happened.

Aongus, well aware of the vengeance with which the king would visit him, for the death of a beloved son, and the attempt on his own life, rapidly fled with his family to the court of Cashel, where Fiacha, king of Munster, received them with every show of kindness and hospitality. The cordiality and friendship of this reception to the now proclaimed rebel, were the signals for hostilities. Aongus, who stood high in the king of Munster's estimation, was assigned the county of Waterford, then called the *Deasies*, as his territory. The O'Phealans, once a powerful sept, called the princes of the Deasies, were the proprietors of the county of Waterford, until the invasion of Henry II when the Le Poers, or Powers, by force of arms, despoiled them of their inheritance. The whole nation sympathized with the monarch on the death of his son, and vowed vengeance against the man who slew him, and wounded the sacred person of the king. A war of extermination was instantly proclaimed against the king of Munster and his people, for sheltering the rebel Aongus. Cormac, burning with indignation, hastened with a large

army into Munster, for the purpose of satiating his revenge in the waste annihilation of that country. The people of Munster quickly adopted measures to oppose the progress of the furious invader.

They encamped on a high eminence, where they had resolved to either conquer or die. Cormac, led on by resentment, and the desire of revenge, made an impetuous charge on his antagonists in this formidable position, in which he was repulsed, after sustaining a serious loss. The royal army were pursued by the victorious Mamonians, who grievously harassed them in their retreat to Kilkenny.

Cormac having received considerable reinforcements here, he began again to act on the offensive. This argumentation of the royal troops induced the Munster army to fall back on Limerick, whither they were speedily followed by the monarch. Here, we are told, the contending forces suffered great hardships and privations by the scarcity of fresh water, as the Shannon was then quite muddy and stagnant, and all the springs in the country were dried up.

Some of our historians were silly enough to attribute this draught to the magic spells and incantations of Cormac's Druids, which they had produced, in order to ruin the Munster forces;—but the Necromancers of king Fiacha, equally potent in enchantments, counteracted the magic design, by extending its evils through the royal camp. Cormac, however, at length, by skilful manœuvres, forced the army of Munster to an engagement, in which they resisted his attacks with such bravery and gallantry, that he was obliged to abandon the field of battle during the night, and leave it in the possession of his valiant enemies,

On the following morning the victorious king of Munster followed up his success with such vigor and celerity, that he succeeded in hemming in Cormac in a defile, in the county of Tipperary, where he constrained him to submit to humiliating terms of capitulation, by which he agreed to relinquish all sovereign pretension to Munster, and to pay into the coffers of king Fiacha as much money as would compensate the people of Munster for the damages and losses occasioned by the invasion.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Cormac invades Connaught—causes his minion, Conla, to assassinate Fiacha, king of Munster.—The monarch banishes the Druids from Tara, and professes himself a Christian.—His death and character.

It was absolute necessity that constrained the monarch to submit to terms so humiliating as those which the victorious Fiacha imposed upon him, on this occasion; so that at the very moment of singing his name and affixing his signet to this celebrated treaty, he had determined to break through its stipulations as soon as circumstances

should afford him an opportunity of doing so. Inveterate resentment and the desire of sacrificing his former benefactor, the gallant king of Munster, to his vengeance, now absorbed, in his mind, every sense of justice and generosity, and congealed every nobler feeling of sympathy and honor in his heart.

Enslaved by the direful influence of these exasperating passions, and chagrined and mortified by the remembrance of his antagonist's triumph, his whole thoughts were occupied in planning his destruction. One day, while the monarch was thus musing on the means of accomplishing his deadly design of revenge, Conla, the son of Tiege, the celebrated General, a great court favorite, came into the royal apartment, for the purpose of informing Cormac, that his whole frame had been suddenly inflamed by a leperous distemper, and of imploring his majesty, who was eminently skilled, like all the Irish *Druids*, in the healing art, to prescribe some cure for the disease which so painfully afflicted him. The royal soothsayer, after examining the state of Conla's body, informed him, with affected sorrow, that his malady would remain irremediable unless the fistulous eruptions of his body were bathed in the blood of a king; a cure which he might despair of obtaining. It is supposed, by our annalists, that Cormac, after giving this opinion to his patient, instigated him to assassinate Fiacha, whose blood would afford the sanative balsam, that could alone assuage and eradicate a painful and malignant distemper.* In a short time subsequent to this conference, Conla repaired to the court of Cashel, where king Fiacha received him in the most hospitable and polite manner. One day, as the king and Conla were walking with a small retinue of nobles, on the flowery banks of the pellucid river Suire, his majesty signified his intention of bathing. No sooner had the devoted Fiacha plunged into the glassy stream, than the treacherous Conla launched his spear at him, which transfixed his body. The regicide was instantly seized by the attendants; but the dying prince, too noble for revenge, commanded that his life should be spared.

We have no further account of this assassin of the brave Fiacha in our annals. It is probable, however, that he was killed by some avenging hand in Cashel.

The eldest son of the murdered king of Munster, OILIOILL O'FLAN MORE, was called to the throne of his ancestors. This Prince having no children, abdicated the crown in favor of his brother, Oilíoll Flan Beag, in the tenth year of his reign. From this king are descended the O'Duns, O'Locheins, O'Comains, O'Dermods, O'Meathus, and O'Nuallans.

Cormac's exchequer becoming exhausted by keeping on foot large armies, both in Scotland and Ireland, he was in consequence driven once more to the alternative of demanding a new tribute from Lein-

* In relation to this incredible story, Dr. O'Halloran makes the following comment in his history. "The tale is told as the mere effect of Druidism; but Cormac who had sense enough to see into the imposture of druidical worship, and, if not a Theist, certainly died a Christian, I do suppose had also cunning enough to make it subservient to his own designs. This apology I thought necessary, as I have no authority for explaining this story in the manner I do, and so much to the dishonor of the Irish monarch."

ster; but the prince and people there pertinaciously refused the required sum. The monarch then sent an army to enforce the payment of the tribute. As soon as the people of Leinster had notice of the approach of the invaders, they flocked to the standard of their general, the famous *Laighseach*, a descendant of the renowned Connal Kearnach, and marching to Athy, in the county of Kildare,* fiercely attacked the foe and put them to the rout and disorder. The valor and genius displayed by *Laighseach*, in the campaign, gained for him the favor of the king of Leinster, and the warm admiration of the people. He was dignified with honors and enriched with rewards.

The monarch bestowed on him the tract of country then called *Leix*, now the Queen's county, and invested him with the office of hereditary treasurer of Leinster, which post was held successively by the members of his family, until the invasion of Henry II. The O'Moore, the princes of *Leix*, were the hereditary chieftains of this illustrious sept, so distinguished in our annals for their martial glory and their romantic chivalry. Mr. O'Moore, of Ballina, in the county of Kildare, is the worthy and legitimate descendant of the great Toparchs of *Leix*. The Flanagan, Eclins, O'Keenans, and O'Ruadins, are collateral branches of this time-honored family.

Cornac, finding that he could not succeed in extorting contributions from Leinster, turned his arms against Connaught, with whose

* *ATHY*, in the county of Kildare, an ancient and respectable post and market town, stands on the beautiful banks of the river Barrow, at the distance of 42 English miles S. W. from Dublin. It is governed by a sovereign, two bailiffs, and a recorder, and in population and wealth is next to Naas, the capital of the country. Before the union, this borough sent two members to the Irish parliament. The place which is now occupied by the town was an ancient ford, leading from the principality of *Leix*, in the Queen's County, to that of *Caelan*, in the county of Kildare. It derived its ancient name, *Ath Trodain*, or the stream of battle, from the rout and discomfiture of Cormac's army, as narrated in the text, by the forces of Leinster, under the heroic *Laighseach*. The town owes its original foundation to the erection of two abbeys, on each side of the river, A. D. 1210. The monastery on the west side of the river, which is now crumbling to ruin, was founded by Richard St. Michael, Lord of Rheban, for crouched friars; that on the east side was founded by the families of the Boisels and Hogans for Dominicans. This romantic and elegant town, of which we shall give a comprehensive account in our topography of Kildare, was the scene of memorable occurrences. In 1315, Prince Robert Bruce, defeated the English army under Sir William Prendergast, near Athy. Sir William, and Haymond La Grace, fell in the engagement, and they, as well as Sir Fergus Anderson, and Sir Walter Murray, two of Bruce's officers, were interred in the Dominican abbey. The castle of Athy, which is still in good preservation, was built to secure the pale, by Gerald, the eighth Earl of Kildare, A. D. 1506.

The brave Owen Roe O'Neil, and Patrick O'Rielly, the chieftain of Cavan, captured Athy from the parliamentary army under Hewson and Reynolds, in 1648.

The Duke of Leinster is the patron of the borough, and the proprietor of the soil; his ancestor, Lord Offaly, became possessed of Athy, Rheban, and Woodstock, in consequence of marrying Dorothea, the only daughter of Anthony O'Moore, Prince of *Leix*, in 1424. Woodstock Castle, now as noble and affecting a pile of feudal architectural ruins as any in Ireland, was originally built by the Earl of Pembroke. This castle was repaired and enlarged in 1575 by the Earl of Kildare, and two of its towers are now used as prisons. Here are chimney pieces of Kilkenny marble that present fine specimens of sculpture, of which we shall give a full description in the topography of the county of Kildare.—P.

king, on some pretence, he had quarrelled. After fighting several battles with the Connacians, he eventually reduced them to subjection, and deposed their sovereign, and raised his own step-brother, Lugna, to the throne. When Cormac had amassed all the money and spoils of Connaught, he evacuated the desolated country, and returned to Tara. But scarce had the monarch been seated in his palace, than he received intelligence of an insurrection in Connaught, which terminated in the death of Lugna, and the expulsion of the royal army out of the country. This news enraged and exasperated the monarch. He again placed himself at the head of his troops, and carried fire and sword once more into Connaught, which he devastated in the most merciless and oppressive manner. The usurping king fled from his throne, and Cormac appointed *Niamhor*, the brother of Lugna, in his room. It was during this expedition that king Cormac lost his eye in an engagement, a deprivation that forced him to abdicate the throne of Ireland soon after. Carbre, the monarch's eldest son, not being then, A. D. 270, arrived at mature age, the national estates elected *Eochaidh Gonnadh*, the grandson of king Fergus, monarch of Ireland. The law that pronounced the monarch, who might be maimed or wounded in fighting the battles of his country, incapable, afterwards, of reigning, was, we think, unjust, cruel, and barbarous. O'Halloran, in narrating this transaction, observes, with great truth, "It is, indeed, singular enough, that the brave Cormac, notwithstanding the many improvements he made in the police of the land; notwithstanding his reducing Connaught into an Irish province, and transferring, in a manner, the crown of it from the Damnonii to his own family; yet still, by the loss of an eye, though in the cause of his country, he was judged unworthy of sovereign authority, and obliged to make a surrender of the crown. His son, too, wanting a short time of that age which the Irish law judged necessary for government, was, on this occasion, laid aside. But it was not enough that an Irish monarch should be of the blood royal, of the equestrian order, and of proper age; he must also be perfect in all his corporeal, as well as mental faculties." *

Dr. Keating, in his history, gives a legendary story of the capture of a Pictish princess, about this period, by some of the knights of the Red Branch attached to Fion's army in Albania; and that after the arrival of the fair captive in Ireland, the monarch heard of her beauty, which is of course represented as fascinating as that of any lovely heroine of romance, and commanded that she should be conveyed to Tara, as soon as possible, privately. The king on seeing her was transported with her attractive charms, and she, kind

* It was not thought decent or propitious in those days for any man to be a monarch who had a personal blemish; he was, therefore, in consequence of the loss of his eye, contented to deliver up the reins of government, and to retire to a mean little house at Anacoil, in the vicinity of his former palace. Here it was, therefore, that he drew up "a Book of Advice to Kings" for the use of his son Carbre, then his successor on the throne, a book full of legislative wisdom and sound philosophy, which Keating and O'Flaherty mention as extant in their day; and of which the former says, that it was such a testimony of Cormac's learning and political knowledge, as is worthy to be inscribed in golden characters for the information of princes, and as a perfect standard of policy to all ages.—WARNER.

lady, "nothing loath," listened to his tender appeal to her heart with joy, and consented to become his mistress. The whole fiction is wound up to a climax of dramatic romance by the enraged jealousy of the queen, and the cruel mode which she resorted to for the purpose of punishing her beauteous rival. This tale, which carries with it the marks of the alchymy of poetic fable, should have never been transfused through the alembic of Irish history by so grave and reverend a writer as Keating.

Warner, and McDermott have, like us, alluded to the imaginary loves of Cormac and the princess *Ciarnuit*, to stamp discredit on this silly traditionary relation.

Before the monarch surrendered the emblems of regal power to his successor, Eochaidh, he published a manifesto, in which he denounced the druids as impostors, and the druidical religion as a system of error, idolatry and heresy; and called upon the princes and people of the nation to break the idols and extinguish the fires of Bel, and transfer their homage and adoration to the great celestial Creator of the sun, as well as of all the universe. This paper was so fraught with powerful arguments, and persuasive eloquence, that a great majority of the princes and national representatives abjured the druidical ritual on reading it. This attack of king Cormac made the state religion of ages totter on its very foundation.* The druids were astounded at what they designated the daring and blasphemous impiety of an abdicating monarch. But when Eochaidh, on the day of his coronation, seated himself on the stone of destiny, and placed the diadem upon his head without their aid or attendance at the ceremony, their alarm became tremendous; and they boldly predicted the ruin of the monarchy.

* "Our celebrated Cormac O'Cuin (perhaps the greatest legislator of the Milesian kings, as he was indisputably the greatest philosopher of our nation) had so much learning and sagacity as to penetrate into the deception and delusion of the druidical creed, which for fifteen centuries had been the established religion of Ireland. This monarch had the courage of openly exclaiming against the imposition and corruption of Druidism, and of asserting the original theology of the superintendence of one omnipotent, eternal, all creating and all merciful Being, in opposition to their superstitious and absurd system of Polytheism. As the laying the axe to the root, struck directly at the authority, and consequently the temporal power of those heathen priests, who warded against the stroke by a seasonable conspiracy, which cost that great monarch his life; but his blood nourished the acorns from whence has sprung the majestic oak of Christianity, which will grow and flourish in spite of the tempest of wars and revolutions in Ireland, until time shall be no more."—*Annals of the Four Masters*.

"Will it," says the liberal English writer, Dr. Warner, "be any longer doubted after this, whether the ancient native Irish had any philosophy, literature, or arts in their pagan state! Will any critic in this country (England) any longer confidently assert, that the Irish had not the use of letters till after the arrival of St. Patrick, and the conversion of the island to Christianity? Ought we, Englishmen, not rather to take shame to ourselves, that we have hitherto always treated that ancient, gallant people, with such illiberal contempt—who had the start of the Britons, for many ages, in arts and sciences—in learning and in laws."

"Anterior to the propagation of the Gospel in Ireland, our great monarch, Cormac McArt, was transcendantly pre-eminent above all others, in the third century, for his profound knowledge in the antiquity and jurisprudence of his country, the schools be endowed, the books be composed, and the laws he established, bear unquestionable testimony of his munificence, wisdom, and learning." *Transactions of the Dublin Gaelic Society*.

King Cormac, well pleased that his religious principles had taken so deep a root in public opinion, retired from the cares, the pomp and grandeur of royalty, to a small cottage near Tara, to devote, after a signal and distinguished reign of twenty-three years, the remainder of his life to philosophy, literature and science. It was in this retreat that this illustrious prince wrote his famous book of *Advice to Princes*, a work that abounds with philosophic views, sound maxims of political wisdom, legislative knowledge, and an elegant literary taste. Here he also revised the *Celestial Judgments*, the Psalter of Tara, and Ollamh Fodhla's Treatise on the Laws and Antiquities of Ireland. His *Advice to Kings* is replete with the results of Legislative and governmental experience, as well as the dictates of that equitable and liberal policy that should regulate the relation of a prince with his subjects. It was written for the instruction of his son, Carbre, and it luminously points out his duty as a king, a legislator, a soldier, a statesman, and a philosopher. A copy of this work was in the hands of Dr. O'Halloran when he wrote his *History of Ireland*. Would to Heaven we could lay our hands on it! and our readers should soon have it in English. Though Cormac did not, in fact, exercise the executive power of the state now, still his influence had a preponderating effect in the councils of the government. All the ministers of the state and principal nobility often visited the humble residence of Cormac to consult him on national affairs. The druids observed with regret that Cormac's opinions and advice were still consulted, and regarded with as much respect and deference as ever. All their efforts to sink his popularity failed. As a dernier resort, they waited on king Eochaidh, and by threats of divine vengeance caused him to issue a proclamation calling on all the princes and notables of the nation, to come and worship the golden calf of Bel, on a stated day at Tara. The behest was imperative, and no person of any consideration was missed from the assembly on the solemn occasion, but the ex-monarch, whom of all other individuals the druids wished to have seen there. They bitterly complained to the reigning sovereign of the impious contempt with which Cormac had treated his decree, not only his decree, but the sacred worship of Bel. Eochadh, in reply to their complaint, suggested to them the expediency of bringing the holy idol to the residence of Cormac, and ascertain whether he was so refractory and heretical as to refuse its divine adoration. A deputation, consisting of *Maioilogeann*, the arch druid, and four of his suffragans, accordingly repaired to Cormac's abode, carrying with them the idol.

When they reached the dwelling of the king, they found him offering up his prayers to the God of heaven and earth. The moment they entered the apartment they set up their idol on a tripod, and then fell down before it in the most profound reverence of devotional obeisance. As soon as the arch druid perceived that the monarch looked upon them and their ceremony with contempt, he arose, and in an authoritative and dogmatic tone, demanded why he refused joining in the adoration of the idol of Bel. The king with great energy replied, that he would worship no idol that human hands

could fashion; for that the Deity whom he adored was so omnipotent that he could, with a breath, extinguish the sun and stars, dry up the ocean, and sink the universe beneath its bed. He then exhorted them to renounce their superstitious ritual, which was unworthy of rational and intelligent beings, and become worshippers of the God who held the destinies of heaven and earth in his divine hands.

The druids appeared horror struck at Cormac's bold blasphemy, as they considered it. Not feeling themselves competent to enter into a controversy on the point, they instantly after the king had done speaking, bore away their calf, uttering imprecations, and vowing vengeance against him.*

On the very evening after this conference, the king was choked by a bone of the salmon on which he supped. When the druids heard of his sudden death, of which they are accused, they repaired in solemn procession to the temple, and announced to the people that the *impious Cormac* was deprived of his life by the interposition of their offended gods. Thus died CORMAC O'CON, monarch of Ireland, a prince who might be emphatically called the Solon of Ireland; for in legislative wisdom, and philosophic illumination, his character will not shrink from a comparison with the Athenian sage. That he did not possess the pity and justice which should ever find an asylum in the breast of a magnanimous king, we readily concede to those who may charge us with heightening, beyond desert, the colors of his eulogium. He was, indeed, ambitious, arbitrary, and revengeful; and on several occasions, during his reign, he invaded the rights of the subject, and listened to the voice of despotism, instead of the admonitions of equity. These are the dark spots that must ever obscure the halo which historic panegyric has thrown around the reputation of "Cormac the Lawgiver." Keating, O'Halloran, and O'Flaherty, concur in stating that in the sixth century St. Columbkille discovered the tomb of Cormac at Cruachan, in the county of Roscommon, in which his body was found quite perfect. The saint erected a church over the royal grave, whose ruins still exist. Our Annalists say that *Fingal* died A. D. 279, shortly after the demise of his royal master, in the camp of the Irish militia (or *Fine Eiren*) at *Mull*, in Argyleshire, Scotland, and that he was interred in a cave, in the island of Staffa, which is to this day denominated "*Fingal's Cave*." † In our next chapter the rise and fall of the Irish militia shall occupy our attention.

* King Cormac had convinced himself of the absurdities of idolatry, upon principles of philosophic reason too just and solid to be shook with their superstitious folly: and had he lived but a little longer, it is probable that paganism would have been extinct in Ireland before the introduction of Christianity, and that the original theology and patriarchal worship would have been restored.
WARNER.

† *Vide Molloy, Annals of the Four Masters, Bishop Usher, Camden, Pinkerton, Shaw, Laing, McDermott, and the Book of Donegal.*

CHAPTER XXX.

The reign and death of king Carbre.—The battle of Gabhra, and the annihilation of the Irish militia;—and the death of Oscar, the son of Ossian. A. D. 297

CARBRE, surnamed *Liffechaire*, in consequence of his having been nursed on the banks of the Liffey,* ascended the throne of his ancestors on the death of *Eochaidh Gonnadh*, who was assassinated in the first year of his reign. This monarch came recommended to the Irish people by all those prepossessions which the reputation of military talents, united with acknowledged literary acquirements, is calculated to create in favor of a new king. Carbre studied war, legislation and philosophy under the enlightened instruction of his father Cormac; consequently, his cultivated genius was equally fitted for the direction of an army in the field, or a council of statesmen in the cabinet. In various exploits in the wars of his father, he gave signal proofs of his courage and capacity in the martial contest, while the treatises which he had written on jurisprudence and national polity raised his literary fame to the loftiest pinnacle of popular opinion.† Carbre, in his early years, was committed to the tutorage of Cormac's chief justice, the celebrated *Flaithrighe*. A singular story is told by our ancient historians, of this chief justice, of which we give a version on account of the moral it conveys. Fiothill, a learned Druid, the father of the chief justice, when on his death bed, called Flaithrighe to his presence, and solemnly conjured him to observe religiously four injunctions which he would impose upon him with his dying breath. "Let," said the profound sage, "no temptation seduce you from the guidance of the following maxims: let them be the rule of your conduct, the beacons shining on the rocks of danger, to warn you from approaching destruction. Then, my beloved son, remember the advice of your father, which a parental solicitude for your welfare behooves him to offer. Let no consideration induce you to become the preceptor of a royal prince; let neither wine nor amorous passion persuade you to entrust a secret to a woman; let neither adulation nor interest

* This pastoral and romantic river, which glides so majestically through the city of Dublin, springs from a ridge of mountains near the seven churches, in the county of Wicklow, through which county, as well as those of Kildare and Dublin, it winds its circuitous progress to the ocean, to which it pays its tributary streams at Clontarf, three miles below the city of Dublin.

† "This prince seemed to inherit all the virtues of his renowned father, Cormac the Great; for, like him, he revised the history and antiquities of his country, reformed the laws, and wrote rules for decisions in certain difficult law cases, which, from their precision, accuracy, and justice, got the title of *Breithe Nimhe*, or celestial judgments. Neither in his personal conduct did he show himself unworthy of his great descent."—*Warner*.

"When we read of the literary performances of the pagan Irish, must we not surrender our judgment to the most incorrigible prejudice if we assert that St. Patrick found them an unlettered people."—*Vide 2 Henry's History of Great Britain*, vol. i. p. 573.

"The great learning of the Irish Druids was the wonder of Europe; and Julius Cæsar alludes to them in his famous account of the Druidical order."—*Pinkerton*.

influence you to elevate a person of low birth and narrow education to an exalted station ; and finally, my dear child, never commit the care of your money, nor the management of your household affairs, to a sister."

The affected son faithfully promised to adhere inviolably to the admonitory injunctions of his parent ; but the sequel will show how soon this resolution was subverted by the intervention of circumstances. Flaithrighe's fame for literary attainments and moral prudence, pointed him out to king Cormac, as the most competent person in his dominions to instruct the heir apparent, prince Carbre. The young and aspiring lawyer was highly elated on receiving his royal pupil, with the commission of chief justice of the kingdom. Considering himself now on the summit of human grandeur, above the assaults of envy or calumny, he formed the resolution of trying, by experiment, the validity and justice of his father's maxims, whose veracity he had long doubted, by putting them to the test of practice. He, therefore, to carry his plan into effect, concealed the young prince, when six years of age, in the hut of one of his foresters, under the care of a confidant, in the middle of a thick wood. Having thus left the child in perfect security, he returned home, and in the presence of his wife assumed the air of the greatest sorrow and dejection. She, surprised and alarmed at the expression of affliction which his countenance exhibited, anxiously inquired the cause that pressed so heavily on his spirits, but he remained as sad and silent as if sorrow deprived him of the power of utterance. This had the effect of heightening her amazement and exciting her curiosity, and summoning to her aid her tears, the most affecting eloquence that a woman can use to soften the heart of man, she at length elicited from him an evasive reply, enunciated in sighing accents and broken monosyllables. To her fond caresses and ardent entreaties, he pretended to yield compassionate pity by telling her that he had that day the misfortune of killing the prince royal. He then, in the most solemn and affectionate manner, conjured and implored her to lock up in her breast a secret on which his life depended. "Oh ! spouse of my affections," replied she, "do you for a moment suppose that my tongue could divulge a secret that would destroy my own happiness, and rob my heart of the source of its earthly felicity. Can you think me so base, so regardless of the fate of a husband whom I love dearer than my own life ?"

The secret lay buried, however, but a day or two in the recesses of her bosom, for on some difference occurring between herself and her lord, she became so incensed against him, that in the fury of her rage, she hastened to the king and informed him of the fate of the prince his son. The unfortunate chief justice was dragged as a criminal from the bench, tried for the murder of the heir apparent, and condemned to die ! During the two days he was allowed to prepare for death, after his sentence of condemnation was pronounced, he wrote to an upstart whom he had raised to high dignity, to intercede in his behalf with the king, but that ingrate thirsted more for his death than any of his enemies, as the chief justice's life must only serve to remind him of his worthless and low origin.

Disappointed by this ignoble creature of his bounty, as well as by the wife of his bosom, he, on the morning appointed for his execution, applied to his sister for the coffers of money with which he had entrusted her a few days before his misfortune; but she, instead of sending it to him, grossly abused his messengers, and utterly denied ever having received any money from her brother. Prior to his ascending the scaffold, however, he solicited an audience of the king, whom he informed of the prince's existence and safety, as well as of the injunctions of his dying father. The king, overjoyed to find that his son was living, embraced the culprit, and ordered the upstart ingrate to be punished, and the wife and sister to be immured for three days in the very dungeon which Flaithrighe had left. No sooner were his fetters knocked off than he flew to the grave of his father, where he dropped a compunctious tear of expiation, and invoked his ghost to pardon his disobedience to parental injunction and sage admonition.

Carbre being as it were the nursling of battles, was inspired with military ardor, and impatient after obtaining the diadem to signalize himself in fresh exploits. The Irish militia, under the command of Ossian, in Albania, having been greatly wasted and reduced in their various battles with the generals of the emperor Diocletian, implored the Irish monarch to send them reinforcements. With this request Carbre resolved to comply; but he foresaw that unless he had money he could not raise a sufficient body of men for the expedition thither. He, therefore, like his father, resorted to the stale expedient of enforcing the payment of the Leinster tribute by the power of his arms.

The Leinsterians far from tamely submitting to this arbitrary aggression, flew to arms to resist it. The formidable preparations made by the people of Leinster for a defensive war in support of their liberties, rights, and property, impressed Carbre with the conviction that the military force then at his disposal in Ireland, was not at all adequate to the task of reducing Leinster. Still resolved to adhere to his original purpose, he employed himself with unwearied assiduity in recruiting his armies, which, under his management and inspection, soon amounted to a powerful force, with which he speedily marched into Leinster. The indignant Leinsterians boldly met him in battle at *Cnamhrois*, in the county of Carlow, and, after a sanguinary conflict, in which the courage and prowess of the rival combatants displayed acts of the most signal heroism, succeeded in gaining a decisive victory over the monarch, whom they put to flight with the loss of ten thousand of his best troops. We may form some idea of the obstinacy and valor with which this engagement was contested, by the immense number of the slain on both sides, which some of our annalists have estimated at fifteen thousand. The monarch's three sons, and some of the bravest of his officers, fell in the action. Notwithstanding the great disaster that attended Carbre's arms in the battle of *Cnamhrois*, his hopes of future conquest were as aspiring as ever, and his resolution of subjugating Leinster instead of being enervated by recent defeat, only derived fresh power of inflexibility from it. He immediately proceeded to

retrieve his deranged affairs, and to fill up the chasms which defeat had made in his ranks. He recalled the Irish militia, with their generals, Ossian and Moghcorb, from Albania, in order to strengthen his battalions by the accession of that legion of heroes who had, for many ages, been the terror of the Roman armies. As the *Fion Eirion*, or Irish militia, have emblazoned the pages of our history with the purest lustre of valor, from the days of Heremon to the epoch of which we are now writing, it becomes necessary that we should give our readers a succinct detail of the rise and progress of that illustrious corps of chivalric heroes.* This band was originally organized by Heber and Heremon, and several of their successors introduced into the body various modes of discipline, and many salutary ordinances of military regulations; but it remained for Cormac Mac Art, the father of Carbre, and his renowned general, *Fion Mac Cumhal*, to render the Irish militia, what the great NAPOLEON rendered his imperial guard, invincible.

None were admitted into this "legion of honor," but young men of respectable parentage, liberal education, and unblemished character. But a candidate that could not, in addition to these

* "In the reigns of Cormac and Carbre, the Irish militia were in their glory. Their exploits were the never failing theme of poetic encomium. At this era, they were commanded by *Fion Mac Cumhal*, (or Fingal, as Dr. Macpherson poetically terms him,) from which they took the name of *Fiana Eirion*, or standing militia of the kingdom."—*Bishop Nicholson*.

"The learned Keating and others tell us that these militia were called *Fin*, from *Fion Mac Cumhal*, (the Fingal of Macpherson;) but it is certainly a great mistake; the word *Fin* strictly implying a military corps. It is on this account that in the MSS. long before the present era, we found the word *Fin* applied to any body of soldiery: thus we read of the *Fin Fomharaig*, or African legions; the *Fin gall*, or foreign troops. Add to this, that in the '*Feis Tighe Cunaine*,' a very old MS. now before me, the champion *Conan* puts the following question to *Fion Mac Cumhal*, from whom it has been asserted that these troops took their name: '*Ca hait an dearnadh an D'ord Fian, ar tnuis an Erin?*' i. e. at what time was the military order first instituted in Ireland? and he answers, in the time of the Danaans. On the partition of the island between Heber and Heremon, the different orders of the people, who attended them from Spain, were also divided; and the lands assigned to the military were on condition of each chief supporting a stipulated number of armed troops to attend the prince when called on. The land thus disposed of, was called '*Fearan an Cloidheamh*,' or the land of the sword. Behold then the origin of military tenures in Europe, and their antiquity in opposition to modern writers!"—*O'Halloran*.

"Campian, an author of little veracity, would impose upon the world by asserting that *Fion*, the brave son of Cumhal, was known by the name of *Roanus*; but this is either an ignorant mistake, or a signal instance of prejudice in this writer, for the father of Cumhal was *Frein More*, (the great,) the fourth lineal descendant from *Nudgadh Neacht*, king of Leinster, and the mother of *Fion* was *Muirn Munchaomh*, the fair daughter of Thady, the son of *Nuagatt*, the arch Druid of Ireland, in the reign of the monarch Cathaoir the Great. Almhuin, in the province of Leinster, was the native county and inheritance of Thady, upon which account *Fion* obtained possession of that district in right of his mother; yet *Fion* was invested with the greater part of the county of Kildare, (then called *Formaoilna*,) by the donation of the king of Leinster. The reason why *Fion* was the general and first commanding officer over the Irish militia, was, because his father and grandfather enjoyed the same dignity before him, and had the honor of being at the head of these invincible troops; but upon this account more especially, he had the principal command of the standing army, as he was a person of superior courage, of great learning and military experience, which accomplishments advanced him in the esteem of the soldiery, who thought him worthy to lead them."—*Keating*.

indispensable recommendations, also adduce testimonies of possessing the following requisites, could not be enrolled under the "SUN-BURST" ensign of the Irish militia.* His parents, in committing him to the ordeal that was to confirm or annul his pretensions, were previously compelled to give security that they would not, in case of his death, resort to any means of revenge. The novice then was given up to the military tribunal, who were invested with powers to examine his mental and corporeal qualifications. He was first called upon to speak extemporaneously a thousand lines of poetry on a given subject, executing this to the satisfaction of his judges; he was next desired to stand at the distance of nine ridges of land with only a shield and a stick for his defence, while nine soldiers threw their javelins at him. If he escaped unhurt, the chief judge put a gold ring on his finger, and complimented him for his skill and dexterity in guarding his person. After having accomplished this, he was again called upon to run into a wood with such celerity, as would outstrip the swiftest soldier of the militia in pursuit of him. Succeeding in this feat of fleetness, only two tasks remained for him to perform; the one required that he should vault over a wall higher than his head, and the other, that he must leap into the saddle of a war horse, while running at full speed, with his heavy armour on.† When all was achieved, the victor was borne in triumph on the shoulders of his exulting friends, cheered by the loud plaudits and exclamations of the spectators, to his home, where the auspicious day was spent in rejoicings and festivities. The Irish militia were divided, like the Roman armies, into cohorts, called *catha*. Each division, or cohort, consisted, according to Dr. Keating, of three thousand men, including officers. The company of a captain contained a hundred soldiers, under him were lieutenants, standard bearers, and sergeants. In times of peace their aggregate number seldom exceeded nine thousand men. Every thousand of these was commanded by a colonel, bearing in Irish the appellation of *Comhlan Mile*, or the chief of ten hundred. Each legion was attended by a proper number of skilful physicians and experienced surgeons, and these were not appointed without undergoing the most rigid examination of their talents and proficiency. Consequently, the nation and the army had the most unshaken confidence in their experience and ability; indeed, so much so, that it became an adage in Ireland, to say of a person dying of an incurable distemper, "*Ni thogfisdh*

* The standard of Fingal was designated the "*sun-burst of victories*."—*Vide Harold's Ossian*.

† "The reader will judge of the propriety of most of these qualifications; but this was not every thing that was required, in order for an admission into this illustrious corps. Every soldier, it is said, before he was enrolled, was obliged to subscribe to the following articles. That if ever he was disposed to marry, he would not conform to the mercenary custom of requiring a portion with his wife; but without regard to her fortune, he would choose a woman for her virtue, her innocence, modesty, and good manners: that he would never offer violence to a woman, or attempt to ravish her; and that he would not turn his back, nor refuse to fight with nine men of any other nation that should set upon him and offer him violence. These were the terms of being a soldier in the militia of Ireland under Fion Mac Cumhal; and whilst these were insisted upon and observed, the body was invincible—a terror to rebels at home, and to enemies abroad."—*Dr. Warner*.

Leagha na bhfion a," the meaning of which is, the inveteracy of his malady could not be conquered or cured, even by the potent skill of the doctors of the Irish militia.

"We likewise find," says O'Halloran, "that each cath had a band of music attendant on it, as well as a number of poets to rehearse their deeds, and excite them to feats of glory. Thus, in the battle of Ventry, when Ossian is hard set, in single combat, the poet Feargus animates him aloud, and he kills his adversary." When not engaged in war, they formed encampments in different parts of the kingdom, where, like an armed police, they preserved tranquillity, and suppressed sedition.* During the winter season they were billeted on the inhabitants; but during the summer months the monarch afforded them no pay, so that they were obliged to support themselves by fishing, hunting, and fowling. "This," writes Dr. Warner, "was not only a great ease to the monarch and his subjects, but it inured the troops to fatigue, preserved them in health and vigor, and accustomed them to lie abroad in the field; and in a country which abounded then so much with venison, fish, and fowl as Ireland did, it was no other hardship than was proper to the life of soldiers." If we are to judge from the manner in which they roasted their animal food, their camp equipage must have been indeed very scanty. Near the stations of their encampments, which were always adjoining a shady wood and a clear running stream, they dug large pits, into which they threw a layer of red hot stones, prepared in great fires for the occasion, over which they placed a layer of flesh, and again another layer of heated stones, and so on in alternation, until the pit was filled up. Traces of these fires, which were large and fierce, are every day discovered in Ireland by the operations of the husbandman, who, on turning up the black ashes that mark their site with his spade, exclaims, "*Fu lucht Fion*," or the ashes of Fin's fires. When invasion or rebellion menaced the safety of the state, the combined quotas of Irish militia, which the monarch summoned from the four provinces, amounted, according to Keating and O'Flaherty, to eighty-four thousand effective soldiers. With such a standing army as this, the Irish monarchs were justly regarded as the arbitrators of Europe: it was this formidable force that enabled them so often to subdue Gaul, Albany, and Wales.

What nation, we would ask, could equal us in those days of war, chivalry and power, in the glory of arms, or the renown of martial exploits? Can the page of the world's history adduce a parallel of military institutions being founded on more excellent regulations

* "In the *Catha Fion tragha*, many of these military stations are pointed out, and the names of the leaders under Fion Mac Cumhal, who then commanded these garrisons. A part of these troops were constantly on service, either in Scotland, to oppose the Romans, (hence our Fin Albanian legions,) or on some continental invasion. From the landing of Cæsar in Britain to its dereliction by the Romans, there was an Irish military force constantly kept up in Albin, (Scotland,) and it is for this reason we find that Cumhal, the father of Fion, as well as Fion himself, and his son Ossian, and grandson Oscar, are each called in several of our ancient manuscripts, '*Righ Fin Eirin agus Albin*,' or chiefs of the military of Ireland and Scotland."—O'Halloran.

than those that formed the military code of the IRISH MILITIA ? Here was a corps of what we might term youthful veterans, into whose ranks none were admitted, except the intrepid, the tried, and the brave ; men whose hearts were strangers to fear, and whose souls were armed with enthusiasm, and fortitude. The Macedonian phalanx, the Roman legions, or the death-defying guard of the emperor Napoleon, in the perfection of their tactics, or the impetuosity of their valor, did not surpass our ancient soldiers.* But it is time that we should revert to king Carbre, and the events that led to the destructive battle of Gabhra. At this epoch, A. D. 292, *Olioll Flan-more*, the son of Fiacha, who was, as already related, so barbarously murdered by Conla, in the reign of Cormac Mac Art, reigned over South Munster with great glory and power. His cousin Moghcorb, the son of Cormac Cas, ruled at the same time the regal government of North Munster. The Psalter of Cashel paints the character of this prince in the most brilliant colors of encomium. Bravery in war, wisdom in legislation, and amiability and generosity in the social relations of life, were the exalted virtues that shone out in his reputation. Shortly after his accession to the throne of *Leath Mogha*, or North Munster, two of his uncles, who were princes of Denmark, besought his assistance to recover from their cousin, the king of that country, the hereditary possessions of which he had unjustly despoiled them. Yielding to this request, and the entreaties of his mother, a Danish princess, he raised a great army, with which he embarked himself, and set sail for Denmark. The Danes met him on the coast, and gave him battle. The conflict was terrible, but, after a desperate struggle, victory at length declared itself in favor of the Irish king ; as the Danish sovereign and his four sons, as well as three thousand of the hostile troops, were left dead on the field of battle. Moghcorb having by this decisive victory the reins of absolute authority over Denmark, put, as it were, into his hands, seated his uncles on the throne, as joint kings, and then, after collecting spoils in, and exacting a large tribute from the nation, he returned to his own dominions, flushed with victory and enriched with trophies of conquest. The fame of his gallant achievement in Denmark preceded his arrival in Ireland ; it filled every heart in Munster and Leinster with pride, joy, and admiration, while it inflamed the jealousy and excited the fears of the supreme monarch, Carbre. "The glory," says O'Halloran, "of Moghcorb's victory extended over all quarters, and was the theme of the bards and antiquarians for many years afterwards." As soon as the royal victor was seated in his palace, he ordered a body of his conquering army to march to the frontiers of Leinster in order to oppose any attack

* "It is to the superior courage and discipline of the old Irish troops we may ascribe the fact of the Romans not being able to subject Ireland to their arms, as they did Great Britain."—*Smith's Antiquities of Wales*.

"They (the Irish militia) gained a name, which fame echoed in every quarter of Europe ; it struck terror into the hearts of their foes."—*Laing*.

"They not only kept their own country free from foreign insults, but also punished the invaders of the allies of the Irish monarch ; as they poured their forces into Gaul, Britain, and the Isle of Man, (the latter for ages a colony of Ireland,) and led on these nations against the Romans."—*Dr. Shaw on the Gaelic language*.

which the troops of Carbre might make on that province. This warlike movement, the monarch constructed as tantamount to a declaration of war against him, and, in consequence, by a decree of the national estates, Moghcorb was pronounced a rebellious prince. It happened about this juncture that Ossian and his son Oscar, as well as several other officers of the Irish militia, partook of a banquet given by the king at Tara. Carbre, on this occasion, when inflamed with wine, vented his rage against Moghcorb, and in the vehemence of his choler, he proceeded to load the memory of Fion Mac Cumhal with bitter reproaches, which had the tendency of stirring up the indignation of Ossian and his son, Oscar, who defended the reputation of their father with a warmth of spirit, and a boldness of language, that roused the mortal ire of the king, who in the effervescence of his anger, struck the poet-hero, and commanded his guards to thrust him and his son out of his palace. Ossian and Oscar, infuriated by the contumely, on their departure, loudly expressed, in the hearing of the king and his nobles, their determination of having revenge for the degrading insult that was thus offered to them. No sooner did they reach the camp of the Irish militia, than they pathetically proclaimed the gross indignity with which the king had treated them. The army who idolized the warrior-minstrel, highly exasperated at the relation of their venerable chief, almost unanimously declared their readiness to avenge his wrongs. The flames of disaffection being thus kindled, soon spread in a full blaze through the whole encampments of the militia, and, in consequence, more than three thousand of these veterans deserted the standard of king Carbre, and with Ossian and Oscar at their head, went over to the ranks of his enemies. As soon as the news of Ossian's defection came to the ears of the monarch, his wrath became boundless, and his burning desire of revenge insatiable, for all the furies of resentment and indignation kindled their devouring fires in his soul. Nothing could now avert hostilities or rescue Ireland from the horrors of a civil war.

Carbre, with great expedition, collected all the troops that he could muster at Tara; his standard soon waved over the heads of a mighty army, consisting of his own legions, and the contingents of Connaught and Ulster. The preparations on the other side of the coming struggle of life, liberty, and dominion, were accelerated by Ossian and Moghcorb, with a celerity that appeared miraculous. Hosts, fully armed, and "ready for the fight," sprung up around their banners as if called forth by enchantment. This embattled array was composed of the allied forces of the two Munsters; the auxiliaries of Leinster, and the *Fion Eirion*, under the command of Ossian and Oscar. In a council of war, held by Moghcorb, who was the generalissimo of the potent army, it was resolved that, in order to carry the miseries of war into Carbre's territories, the troops should penetrate into Meath by forced marches, and strike, if possible, a decisive blow before the royal troops would be fully concentrated. The plan was carried into effect with unexampled success and rapidity, and the valiant Moghcorb was encamped on the plains of Gabhra, within three miles of Tara, before Carbre had

an intimation of his march from Wexford. An immediate engagement was rendered inevitable by this skilful and expeditious movement of Moghcorb. Carbre drew up his forces with great order and precision; himself led on the centre, the king of Connaught, Aodh O'Connor, assisted by his two sons, commanded the right wing, and Fiachadh, the eldest son of Carbre, the left. The military genius, the bravery, and chivalry of Ireland contended for victory in this memorable battle. It was the strife of heroes, the murderous conflict of men mutually animated with the feelings of fell revenge, and the determination of destroying their foes or of nobly dying in the attempt. Death and carnage paved the way for annihilation through the hostile ranks of the bloody field of Gabhra. Carbre made an impetuous charge, and ranks fell before him like the leaves of the forest when swept by the autumnal storm. His whole fury was directed against the rebellious Irish militia, whom his guards, assisted by the Connacians had almost cut to pieces, when Oscar came to their aid with a select band, and encountering the king, sword in hand, for a moment stopped the overwhelming torrent of destruction; but, after a fierce and furious combat, Carbre killed Oscar,* and the Connacians deriving new courage from seeing the fall of that hero, made another irresistible assault on the remnant of the militia, in which they utterly destroyed it, as the aged Ossian, we are told by all our historians, was the only person that survived that far famed band of heroes. Moghcorb, at the head of the *Clana Dehea*, or Munster militia, rushed towards the king to have vengeance for the death of Oscar, and though Carbre was weak and wounded after his combat with the slain son of Ossian, he opposed his adversary with the most heroic resolution and intrepidity; but, after a brave struggle that developed the prowess of a giant, he fell, with his breast perforated by the spear of his foe. The lowering of the royal standard was the signal of the monarch's death, and the cessation of hostilities between the few exhausted survivors of the terrible battle of Gabhra.

Thus died the gallant monarch, CARBRE LIFFECHAIRE, a victim to ambition and the love of absolute sway. As a soldier and a statesman, his character merits the meed of historical eulogy; but as a monarch of Ireland he sacrificed the lives and happiness of his people to his own ambition, and chained bleeding justice to the

* "We have yet extant a relation of the battle of Gabhra, supposed to have been told by Ossian, the father of Oscar, to St. Patrick; but it were absurd to suppose that he who was advanced in years at that dreadful conflict, should be alive near a century and a half after! It is visibly of a later date, and intended to extol the army of Leinster at the expense of truth; yet as it preserves the names and actions of the principal heroes on both sides in this most bloody of all battles, it merits attention."—*O'Halloran*.

Mr. Macpherson, who studied our ancient history attentively, in order to give an artificial gloss of truth, and a borrowed air of probability to his barefaced fabrication of the poems of Ossian, introduces a vague and visionary description of the battle of Gabhra, in the first book of "*Temora*," but it is a sad jumble of synchronism, a mass of historical and topographical error, without a beacon or a landmark to direct inquiry. Ossian and his nephew, the bard Ronan, are only traditionally represented by some of our poets to have lived until the coming of our great patron saint to Ireland.—*P*.

triumphal car of unholy despotism, instead of acting like a patriot-king, by assigning her an asylum in the hallowed temple of constitutional *liberty*. Out of all the princes that fought in the sanguinary battle of Gabhra, only two brought life from the field; the victor, Moghcorb, and the wounded Aodh, king of Connaught; and these two solitary survivors cherishing still the most implacable enmity for each other, engaged in a new war, which resulted in the defeat and death of the valiant Moghcorb, in less than the period of a year after the fatal day of Gabhra.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Milesian Literature.—Ossian, and the ancient Irish Bards.

As Hume, Macpherson, Sir George Mackenzie, and other unprincipled revilers, actuated with the most ungenerous prejudice, and influenced by the most culpable degree of national vanity, to which either truth or historical justice has been ever sacrificed, have sedulously essayed to establish and disseminate throughout Europe, the opinion, that the Irish nation had neither letters nor arts, until St. Patrick introduced them into their country with the Christian dispensation, we think, we will not only gratify our readers, but illustrate our history by devoting a chapter to the review of our ancient literature and science.

A venal and apostate Irish writer, the late Dr. LEDWICH, has, we are sorry to say, in the baseness of his subserviency to the English traducers of his native land, and in the expectation of obtaining a mitre, as the dishonorable reward of his vile calumnies, stooped to the degradation of playing second fiddle to our Albanian and Saxon libellers, and of becoming the trumpeter of their defamatory falsehoods. The recreant maligner has, in consequence, consecrated his name, like him that fired the Ephesian temple, to an execrable immortality, and proved to the world, by his ignoble perversion of truth, that he was

“Unworthy of the blessings of the brave,—
Most base in kind, and born to be a slave!”

The apostacy of Ledwich from the historical orthodoxy of his country, filled the Scotch literati, who were still staggering from the felling blow which the colossal arm of Dr. JOHNSON inflicted on their arrogant pretension to Ossian, with feelings of pride and exultation. His raven notes “came upon their ears,” as Macpherson has it, like the melody of the nightingale, when heard by a bewildered traveller in the woody labyrinth; his arguments, though glittering in the glare and tinsel of sophistry, were pronounced the refined gold of eloquent logic; and his assertions, though blemished by the stains of moral turpitude, were exhibited in the deceitful mirror of Scotch philosophy, as the inspired divinations of the oracles of unimpeachable candor.

He was enrolled among the champions who fought the battles of Scottish veracity, and numbered in the register of inflated eulogium, as the gifted and candid historian, on whose beaming mind the historical muse poured the milder influence of her auspicious irradiation.

After he had published what he called the "*Antiquities of Ireland*," every press in Scotland was employed in multiplying editions of a work, which the Scots regarded as the expiatory altars for the immolation of Irish history, and records, as well as a lasting monument reared up by the penitent and atoning genius of an Irish annalist, to attest the fact of Ossian being a native of Caledonia!

Ledwich sets out in his feeble attack against the historians of his country, on his Quixotic crusade, by making the following rather feeble and neutralized show of hostilities.

"When we review the remote histories of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and find names and facts delivered with unhesitating confidence and chronological accuracy, it seems at first an unreasonable degree of scepticism to withhold our assent from them, or question their authority. But minuter inquiry satisfactorily evinces them to be but specious delusions, and some of the numberless vagaries of the human mind."

Here, then, the spiritless deserter from his country's phalanx, has not the hardihood to say, that the chart of Irish history is not marked with chronology, and harmonious arrangement of facts. Here are shining landmarks that cannot be removed, and rocky pillars of authenticity, surviving the ruin of ages, which apostate Irish scepticism, or preposterous Scotch vanity, cannot subvert or annihilate. The species of vague and speculative conjecture, with which the doctor has assailed our annals, is quite impotent;—his battery stands on a quagmire—it shakes while its arrows are hurled at the rock-sustained citadel of Erin's recorded story. Dr. Ledwich allows that we have chronology, "and facts delivered with unhesitating confidence," and yet, though our annals rear their proud dome on so immutable and indestructible a basis, his "unreasonable scepticism" could not be brought to consider it a solid and stable foundation! But there are men, clinging so tenaciously to their own favorite opinions, and rendered so impregnably obstinate in the entrenchments of pride, conceit, and interest, that it is impossible to make them recede from apparent error. Burke emphatically illustrates, and shows the absurd tendency of this headstrong species of vulgar obstinacy. "I am satisfied," says he, "that a mind which has no restraint from a sense of its own weakness, may very plausibly attack every thing the most excellent and venerable,—that it would not be difficult to criticise the creation itself, and that if we were to examine the divine fabrics by our ideas of reason and fitness, we might make the wisdom and power of God in his creation appear to many no better than foolishness. There is an air of plausibility which accompanies vulgar reasonings and notions taken from the beaten circle of ordinary experience, that is admirably suited to the narrow capacities of some, and to the laziness of others;"—"for," says Isocrates, "it is far more easy to maintain a wrong cause, and

to support paradoxical opinions to the satisfaction of a common auditory, than to establish a doubtful truth by solid and conclusive arguments." The credit that so magnetically attaches itself to the early period of our history, does not entirely depend on the veracity of the Milesian historians; for they, it is true, recorded the history of their predecessors, as they had received it from themselves; and instead of adopting that barbarous policy which degrades the annals of the Romans, Saxons, Saracens, and other victorious nations—instead, we say, of destroying the written, or suppressing the traditional accounts for which they had been indebted to the conquered inhabitants, they assiduously recorded them with that industry, and with that integrity which characterize their own annals for many succeeding ages. We do not, however, deny the fact of the Milesian historians having a fondness of embellishing their narratives with the borrowed graces of fiction and of romance, as it must be remembered, that the first recorders of national annals are bards and patriots, who wish to extol in the exaggeration of patriotism and the luxuriance of poetry, the deeds of their ancestors: consequently it was not easy to divest themselves of the passion of ornamenting truth, and clothing its naked simplicity in the alien robes of fancy and hyperbolical decorations.

"The want of literary memorials,"* continues Ledwich, "created an impenetrable obscurity, which every attempt to deduce the origin of nations or detail early events, was unable to penetrate or dispel. How, then, were national honor, and high-born ancestry, the love of which is most conspicuous and prominent in a rude people, to be supported? The answer is, by poetic tales and bardic inventions,—and, hence we find the wild and naked German sang the praises of his great progenitor, *Tuisco*; the Highlander of Scotland, the exploits of *Cuchullen*; and the Hibernian, the wonderful peregrinations of *Milesius*."

Dr. Ledwich imagined, we presume, that he would have prostrated all our pretensions to high and illustrious antiquity by this sweeping charge—a charge which, though ridiculous and vague, did not originate with him, as Buchanan, Blair, and Sir George Mackenzie, have taunted us with it often; while English prejudice, ever anxious to seize on any tale discreditable to Ireland, loudly trumpeted forth the allegation of our "*want of literary memorials*." Indeed, every thinking person knows that the historian who cannot find authenticated materials and attested records to weave into the web of historic narrative, must of necessity resort to the stores of conjecture to supply the deficiency.

The question and answer that succeed, have in them nothing

* "The Irish can lay a higher claim to antiquity than any other nation in Europe. Let their history be tried in two ways, in which all historical systems must be tried,—whether it is consistent with probability, and whether it is supported by such evidence as it is reasonable to expect, I presume to think it will stand the test. For as the Jews, even before they had the history of Moses, and before letters were invented, found ways to preserve their genealogies, and many of their chief actions, down from Adam, why should it be thought incredible that the Irish, who were an observing people, should carry their history above thirteen hundred years before Christ, which is not half the way up to the beginning of heathen history."—*Dr. Warner*.

more original than the trite observation of our alleged want of "literary memorials." But let us see what the doctor has so sagely concluded from his hypothetical premises. We have already observed that the drift of the doctor's remarks on the fabulous heroes of the Germans—of the Highlanders, and of the Hibernians, was borrowed from other writers, who have assailed in vain the fortress of our historical system; but to himself we may fairly attribute the inconsistency and dogmatic assurance of the conclusion, which he has so unwarrantably and so illogically drawn from the unsupported assertions of the Albanian historians. We indeed grant that many nations in Europe, for want of "literary memorials," have had recourse to poetic fiction to raise materials for building up a chimerical monument of "national honor and high-born ancestry." But before the doctor classed his native country among the nations that were, thus, destitute of written evidences of remote antiquity, he should have satisfactorily proved that Ireland was not possessed of real, authenticated, and verified memorials of her ancient refinement in civilization, of her glory in arms, and of her illumination and proficiency in letters and arts.

To deny a nation the use of letters, is to sap the very pillars that sustain her history, and to extinguish the lights by which posterity might read her records of the martial exploits of her heroes, and the achievements of her literary genius in the fields of science and philosophy. It were as fruitless a task for Dr. Ledwich to prove Julius Cæsar an imaginary hero, who was cast in the mould of poetic fiction, as to convince any one acquainted with Irish history, that such a person as our great ancestor, Milesius, never existed. Bishop Hutchinson, Dr. Shaw, and the late able and erudite antiquarian, Mr. P. M'ELLIGOTT, of Limerick, have abundantly proved that the cavils of the doctor against our historical system were impotent, and that a man like him, utterly ignorant of the Irish language, was absolutely incompetent to shake its immoveable basis, or cast clouds of obscurity over the bright horizon of Milesian antiquities. The doctor's reasoning sets every rule of Locke at reckless defiance; for he certainly should not have taken the asserted want of memorials as if granted, nor have argued from it as if it had been conceded as an admitted principle, especially as he had not yet proved by a "minute inquiry" the unfounded reproach of our destitution of literary memorials. It was indeed a gigantic stride—a resolute onset in Dr. Ledwich, in his attack on the history of his country, to occupy at once a bold position, and assume that for *granted*, which all the powerful labors of antiquarian research and historical investigation have hitherto been unable to prove. But presumption is ever the stronghold of futile and unsupported argument. Bold and arrogant assertions are the weapons with which sophistry combats in the lists of controversy. Perhaps that the doctor concurred in the opinion of Bacon, that "boldness in critical cases, often effects what legitimate talent would fail to accomplish; yet boldness is a child of ignorance and baseness; but nevertheless, it doth fascinate and bind hand and foot those that are either shallow in judgment or weak in courage;—yea, and prevaieth with wise men at weak times."

The ignoble impugner of our historical creed, after endeavoring to prepossess the mind of his reader with a strong prejudice against "bardic fictions and unfounded tradition," proceeds, through pages of false deductions and incoherent arguments, to exhibit the legendary character of our antiquities; but instead of the ingenious investigation or the lucidity of the boasted "*minute inquiry*" with which he promised to illuminate the obscurity of our recorded story, he only seduced his readers, by a rush-light of elucidation, into the dark mazy catacombs of error and sophistry.

Dr. Ledwich was certainly a learned man in classical and English literature, but he was eminently devoid of the great attributes of an impartial historian—candor and integrity of principle. The ambition of wielding a prelate's crosier, and of wearing an episcopal mitre, rendered his patriotism frigid, and his honor a panderer to his passion. Aware of his own incapacity to confute the powerful arguments marshalled under the banners of our ancient historians, by Usher, Ware, Vallancey, O'Connor, and Dr. Warner, he summoned to his aid Dr. Macpherson, and placed him in the van ground of his controversial warfare with the literary champions of Ireland. After deriding our claims to an eastern origin, he launches into an extravagant panegyric on the abilities of the fabricator of the *poems of Ossian*. "This learned and ingenious writer," (Macpherson,) adds he, "has carefully examined, and fully confuted the notion of the Hispanian extraction of the Irish." But why has not the national traducer quoted some of the arguments which this "learned and ingenious writer" made use of to controvert and confute our well-founded notion of Milesian descent. We know, however, the borrowed arguments employed by Dr. Ledwich never made a proselyte to his historical heresy, nor did they bring an acquisition of strength to the silly attempts made by Macpherson to overthrow the credit of our annals, in order to forge a pretended antiquity for his own country. But Dr. Johnson's potent pen, like the wand of a magician, scattered the Utopian fabric of Macpherson into dust, and plucked the stolen laurel from the brows of Caledonia, and restored it to the wreath of Erin; while other accomplished writers have come forth, arrayed in the armour of truth and justice, and overwhelmed the conclusions of the cavilling Dr. Ledwich.

Honest Scottish writers, such as Laing, Pinkerton, and the acute and classical *Jeffrey*, have pronounced the defence of our history and antiquities by Shaw, Hutchinson, Bernard, O'Connor, Nicholson, and Lanagan, as conclusive, convincing, and irrefutable. The doctor's opposition to the authenticity of our annals, pitted itself on ten or a dozen of garbled quotations from several of our ancient historians, whom he sought to represent as dealers in fiction and poetic invention. We, indeed, have uniformly in the pages of this history admitted that a portion of fable, introduced for moral purposes, has been blended with a relation of facts in the composition of our annals. We think, however, that the poetic coloring which has been thus used to ornament the narratives of the Irish annalists, rather tends to strengthen the authenticity of their relations, than to afford grounds for the charge brought against them by foreign writers, of being fabricated in later times.

When the doctor's book, inappropriately entitled "*Irish Antiquities*," was published, the editors of an Analytical, Critical and Monthly review, extolled it with the most fulsome encomiums; not for its literary merit, not for the depth of its research, nor the comprehensiveness of its details, but for the efforts made by its author to depreciate the credit of our Irish historians, and sink their records of the primeval greatness and glory of ancient Ireland into disrepute and disregard. But were these reviewers competent to form an accurate estimate of the antiquities of a nation with whose original language they were wholly unacquainted? These men might as well attempt to review the philosophy of Confucius without the slightest knowledge of the Chinese,—they might, in fact, with better pretensions to truth, undertake to explain all those phenomena of nature, whose causes have as yet baffled the inquiry of science, and probably ever will, escape the acumen of human penetration, as to presume to offer a dissertation on the literature and antiquities of Ireland. Dr. Ledwich, having no knowledge of the Irish language, being ignorant of the characters of its very alphabet, and, consequently, of the ideas which they represent, could not by possibility illustrate the subject on which he has so dogmatically descanted, with any comprehension beyond the narrow space of hypothetical assertion and indefinite arguments. If this shallow species of controversy should be admitted into the field of disputation, it would be an easy task for any doubting sciologist to destroy the sacredness of all truth whatever, whether in physics, ethics, or religion. Might not a man with ordinary talents and intelligence argue, at least with as strong a claim to credibility as Dr. Ledwich, that the history of the Jewish nation is entirely a romance, the visionary creations of Hebrew bards, and that as no other country in the world has preserved memorials of its early history, we ought to conclude that the events related in holy writ owe their existence to the inventions of imagination? But though it be uncertain when an event occurred, does it follow that it never happened? This kind of corollary was uniformly resorted to by Dr. Ledwich to help out his friend Macpherson from the labyrinths of his untenable paradoxes.

It is conceded by general experience, that many occurrences are narrated in history to which no chronology has assigned a particular date, and yet but few doubt the truth of their having actually taken place. Who can tell the day and hour that the world was created? Moses records the event, and we give credence to his history. It is such a frivolous objection as this which is urged by the denouncers of Irish antiquities; such are the grounds of reproaching us with being "pertinacious defenders of palpable fictions." Dr. Keating, who has given more of the fabulous part of Irish history than any other of our annalists, relates them for the purpose of exhibiting the manners, customs, habits, and opinions of the nation, and thus they served to shed the light of illustration on positive events, and to give expression to the sentiments of the age; so that, to cite the opinion of an intelligent historical writer, (M'Dermott,) "it is, perhaps, to the fabulous portion of ancient history we are chiefly indebted for our most correct ideas of the manners and peculiarities of our remote ancestors."

The writings of Dr. Ledwich impress us with the belief that he was a most dogmatic and supercilious disputant; and he seems to have spoken with most pertinacious confidence where he was most involved in the obscurity of error. In the fury of his zeal to invalidate the authenticity of our antiquities, and to immure them in the tomb of historical scepticism, he had not the generous candor of telling his readers that many literary memorials to prove that we derived letters and science from our Milesian ancestors, are still in existence. It seemed to be the object of the unpatriotic writer to have extinguished the beacons of history—to subvert the veritable structure of our revered annals—to impeach the testimony of the hoary witnesses of ages, and to destroy a time-honored system, by ingulfing in an abyss of oblivion all the sacred monuments of Milesian renown. His unsocial and misanthropic theory was a fearful monster, which, having no progeny of its own, only watched with malicious envy an opportunity of destroying the offspring of others.

Giving credit to the calumnious assertions of *Bolundius*, which endeavored to persuade Europe that we had no letters or science before the mission of St. Patrick, he did not take the trouble of ascertaining whether he had "*literary memorials*." Had he read Jocelyn he might have learned that St. Patrick was amazed on hearing the eloquent disputations of the Druids, and the inspired stanzas of the Irish Laureate, *Dubthagh*.^{*} Among the four hundred volumes, exquisitely written in illuminated Phœnician characters, which the zealous saint committed to the flames at Tara, in order to exterminate paganism, were two large tomes, narrating the migrations of the Milesians, of which Irial, the prophet monarch of Ireland, who reigned, A. M. 3025, was the author. The autograph writings of *Ollamh Fodhla*, of Cormac O'Con, the Solon of Ireland, of Ossian, and of innumerable other regal and druidical authors, unfortunately for our ancient literature, shared the same devouring fate. The famed

^{*} "This bard, whom his countrymen designated "the light of wisdom and the soul of song," is said to have first set the example, and to have bent the knee in obeisance to the holy missionary, St. Patrick; and Jocelyn, after lauding the pathetic beauty of some of his poems, which are still preserved among the relics that Danish and English invaders left us, relates that the royal Laureate of *Lughair*, our first Christian monarch, exercised his talents in hymns of praise to the most high God, in place of celebrating, as before, the vain and transient glory of temporal princes."—*Vide O'Flanagan's Essays on Irish Literature*.

"St. Patrick found the Irish Druids eminently conversant with Greek literature."—*Cambden*.

"It is to our great apostle we are indebted for the Roman alphabet; for prior to his coming, our ancestors used but sixteen letters, and wrote from right to left, according to the eastern usage introduced by Cadmus."—*Transactions of the Gaelic Society*.

"The apostle was very desirous to introduce the Roman language among a people whom he succeeded in converting; and Colgan asserts that the saint taught Latin to *Dubthagh* the great poet, who, in return, instructed the saint how to speak the Irish. Many of the manuscripts of our ancient Laureate are still preserved as venerable relics of our ancient literature in Connaught."—*Bishop Molloy*.

"Cæsar, in speaking of the Druids of Ireland, informs us that they were men of letters—that they knew philosophy, theology, and the other sciences; and that such of the Gauls as wished to be perfected in the knowledge of their mysteries, travelled to Hibernia for instruction."—*Critical Essay on the Scote-Milesian Antiquities*. Dublin, 1811.

Leabhar Leacain, which was written in the first century, was carried from Trinity college, Dublin, by James II. and deposited in the archives of the Irish University in Paris.* This is a complete history of the laws and genealogies of Ireland for many ages. King Cormac, our great legislator's work on the duties of a king, is still preserved in the library of the late duke of Chandos, where it was deposited by the celebrated lord Clarendon. The translator of Keating states, in his preface, "that he saw in the library of Trinity College, among other manuscripts, a volume in folio, written on parchment, made from the bark of an oak tree, centuries before St. Patrick was born.

These and many other existing monuments, of whose reality and antiquity there can be no rational doubt entertained by any mind unwarped and unbiassed by the dark dogmas of such apostate pyrrhonism, as perverted the better judgment and debased the Irish feelings of Dr. Ledwich.†

It was from these creditable authorities, and various other documents, which existed until the irruption of Danish barbarians into our fair clime, and the subjugation of our ancestors by English conquest, effected by treachery, that all our early historians borrowed the materials of their details, and the irrefragable proofs of our eastern extraction. The Huns of Elizabeth and the ruthless Goths of Cromwell demolished our abbeys, and the vast literary treasures they contained.‡ For, as we have already sufficiently shown in the course of this history, there was no nation in Europe, had such a rich repository of literary monuments as Ireland before the Danish and Saxon invasions, or where poets, philosophers, and legislators wrote so voluminously and elaborately, as Bede, Fordun, Cambden, Stillingfleet, Warner, Whitaker, and Laing, with a degree of commendable liberality, admit. Even Sir George Mackenzie, who was

* "The late Mr. Charles O'Connor had a copy of the Book of Lecan in his possession, the accounts in which he compared with Newton's Chronology, and found their dates to accord most particularly. Another copy of this celebrated book was presented by the Rt. Rev. Dr. McKenna, bishop of Cloyne, to Dr. O'Halloran, which he acknowledged in the preliminary discourse to his history of Ireland. The Abbe M'Geoghegan, who wrote his history of Ireland in Paris, tells us that a copy of the same book was carefully preserved in the Vatican."—*A Vindication of the Early History of Ireland*.

† "In the annals of Ulster are copied several poems of *Forchearn Mac Deag* and *Asthirne Mac Amhuas*, who were the bards of Connor, king of Ulster, a century before the Christian era."—*Hutchinson*.

"Our history and poetry, our laws and philosophy, have been deranged and dispersed, shattered and mutilated, and nearly consigned to contemptuous neglect and annihilating oblivion. Nothing now remains of our native literature but the mutilated, yet interesting fragments of the poetry and wisdom of a singularly reflecting people. Thus the venerable fabric of our ancient dignity had been hurled down a dreadful precipice by the storms of persecution and adversity; and the only consolation left is, that it appears affecting and majestic, even in ruin!"—*Observations on the Irish Language*.

‡ "Elizabeth gave orders to her officers to destroy every Irish manuscript they could find. The Milesians of Ireland enjoyed their own laws and customs until the reign of James I., when the Brehon system of jurisprudence was suppressed, and the English code established. Then for the first time the Gaelic ceased to be spoken by the chiefs of families, and at court; and English schools were erected with strict injunctions that the vernacular language should no longer be spoken in the seminaries."—*Vide Shaw's Gaelic Grammar*. Edinburgh, 1778.

for a while the resolute champion of Macpherson's literary impositions, candidly admitted, in his "*Defence of the royal line of Scotland*," published, A. D. 1685, that he had to resort to Irish history for facts, and that he fortunately procured a manuscript which belonged to the abbey of Hi Columbkille. "Since I began this work," says he, "there fell into my hands a very ancient manuscript of the abbey of Hi Columbkille, written by the Irish monarch, *Carbre Liffeachaire*,* who reigned about six generations before St. Patrick visited Ireland. This manuscript gives an exact account of the Irish kings, whence I must conclude that the Irish had letters and manuscripts before the days of St. Patrick, and that they did not borrow, as many writers have unjustly stated, their alphabet from that missionary."† But we trust we have adduced ample reasons to prove the unfounded arguments and puerile objections urged by Dr. Ledwich, through a spirit of apostacy, and the desire of an episcopal stall, against the history and antiquities of his country. Influenced by his ambition, and assuming a composed and philosophic aspect, to win over a certain class of readers for his doctrine, to whom the calumny of Ireland was a literary treat, he brought into action all the industry of ingenious bigotry, to inculcate the opinion, that our pretended extraction from the Milesians originated in the general diffusion of "*oriental fabling*."

So much for the late Dr. Ledwich;—let us now proceed to say a few words to his friend and prototype, Dr. James Macpherson, the pretended translator of the poems of Ossian. The attacks of Dr. Macpherson have been already so signally and decisively repelled by able Irish writers, that it would be like "fighting the Ossianic battles over again," and slaying the vanquished, to array a defence against them now. A few observations may, however, be bestowed on the history of Ossian. In his preface to the history of Great Britain and Ireland, the Scottish doctor states, "that Spain, the centre of oriental fabling, always enjoyed the celebrity above that of any other European country; the Irish, therefore, esteemed it a matter of the greatest importance to exhibit a clear deduction of their ancestors from thence, and which their native writers, in every age, have zealously inculcated as a fact." We do not know by what geographical rule, the Scotch Ossian could place in his Utopian map, Spain, the most *westerly* part of Europe, in the centre of "oriental fabling;" nor have we yet learned from all we have read, that the Spanish nation was ever so distinguished, either by the lustre of arms, the feats of chivalry, or the renown of poetry, as Greece and Rome. It is also a groundless assertion to say "that the Irish esteemed it a matter of great importance to deduce their ancestors

* See the last chapter of our history.

† "Nothing could be so absurd or so contrary to the evidences of facts produced by old Irish manuscripts, as the assertion that the Irish had no alphabet until the period of St. Patrick's arrival."—*Whitaker*.

"Raymond has incontestably proved that the Irish characters were those used by the ancient Celtic nation. He has adduced such testimonies of the identity of the old Celtic and Irish languages, as must irrefragably answer all the objections which Innis, Macpherson, and other writers have made to the early use of letters in Ireland."—*Warner*.

from thence." Now it is indeed to be wondered at, that Dr. Macpherson, who boasted of having carefully studied our annals, should be so ignorant of the claim which we always, from the earliest epoch of our history, steadily maintained and set up—that of being the legitimate descendants of Milesius, a Scythian prince, as will appear to those who may peruse the beginning of this history. Dr. Macpherson might as well affirm, that we claimed our origin from Egypt or Crete, where the Milesians were sojourners, as from Spain.

The doctor and the most noted of his literary countrymen, put their utmost skill and ingenuity to work, in order to stamp the signet of credibility on his version of Ossian. To produce an impression throughout Europe, that the Irish historians were mere dreaming romances, was the plan designed by the national vanity of Mackenzie, Blair, Macpherson and Hume, who, in their unwearied attention, wrote countless essays and *dissertations*, for the purpose of stripping our ancient testimonies of the respect and credit, which revolving ages had so deeply impressed upon them. A Utopian kingdom, called *Selma*, was discovered by the telescope of invention in the highlands, and the waves of Scotland miraculously cast upon the shore, to the great joy of the natives, a king *Fingal*, ready crowned and armed. Here was a new paradise opened for the recreation of Albanian imagination, and the brave *Fion Mac Cumhal*, the gallant leader of the Irish militia, who so often protected the highlanders from the ravages of the Romans, underwent as strange a metamorphose as any in Ovid, by being transformed into a Caledonian monarch.

Ossian, the Irish bard, the son of Fion, whose harp breathed the tones of his native music, to inspire the Caledonians with courage, and whose hands wielded the spear and the target in the martial conflict, against the Roman enemy, was claimed as a sturdy highlander, and as such, verses and songs attributed to him that never emanated from his mind.*

* "The late amiable, venerable, and REV. DR. SHAW, of Shelvy parsonage, near Bristol,—'the sturdy moralist, who loved truth better than Scotland,' however strongly attached to his nativity, proved, from personal knowledge, that the *Post original* of Mr. Macpherson's poems, is a modern fabrication; as well as that the list of *Gaelic* manuscripts, given at the end of the gorgeous publication, were *Irish*, not *Albanian*."—*Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Dublin*.

"That eminently ingenious and accomplished scholar, the late Bishop of Clonfert, (DR. YOUNG,) was warmly affected towards Irish literature. In the summer of 1784, he traversed the highlands in search of Gaelic poetry. He was directed to a bookseller in Perth, with whom, it was asserted that the original of Macpherson's poems were deposited. On inspection, however, it proved to be an ancient Irish manuscript on vellum, containing historic tracts, and several genealogies; particularly one of the illustrious house of O'Neil. The bishop, while in Scotland, wrote a letter to a friend in Dublin, from which we take the following extract. 'The Irish language is spoken with considerable accuracy, in many parts of the highlands of *modern* Scotland. This I conclude from having conversed with several gentlemen of this country with the greatest ease and familiarity; and I must add that none of them refused an immediate and unequivocal acknowledgment that the Gaelic of Scotland was a dialect of the *mother tongue* of Ireland; as well as the highland Scots were the descendants of a colony from the mother country. They readily assented to the dishonorable fabrication of Macpherson, and declared that they knew from undisputed tradition, that Fingal, Ossian, Oscar, and all the other Finnian heroes were Irishmen.'"—*Ibid*.

In fabricating a system of antiquities for his country, and in peopling it with a race of heroes of ideal creation, he had to draw largely upon his inventive genius, for he had to create new scenes, build up the palace of *Selma*—embank the lake of *Cona*—provide wives and mistresses for his Fingalian heroes—forge chains of circumstances—bring together men and their exploits who lived at distant periods, and to make the established and sacred principles of truth, a basis for the fanciful pillars on which the imposing fabric of his literary imposture rested. But the magic pile has vanished, and critical justice has torn off the mask that for a while hid the false divinity of Scottish pretension: imposition has withered before the indignant glance of patriotic investigation; and equitable justice has restored the original right of Ireland, in compliance with the request of unprejudiced judgment. There is not now a literary Scotchman in existence, would have the arrogance of claiming our Ossian for a countryman; and but few that would have the hardihood to assert, in the face of attested history, in the teeth of an incontrovertible testimony, corroborated by contemporaneous evidence, confirmed by universal tradition, and strengthened by the concurring circumstances of ages, that our annals and antiquities are the creation of poetic fancy, or the romantic fables of monkish imagination. Away then with that iniquitous system of historical fabrication! which, to accommodate itself to the vanity and prejudices of one nation, would despoil another of the trophies of ages, and sacrilegiously rob the sacred shrines of Irish piety of their antique jewels, and the niches of Irish fame of the statues of our kings, princes, bards, warriors, *senachies*,* and legislators. The Scotch writers of the last century, (those of the present, ashamed of the deeds of their predecessors, have prudently renounced their historical errors!) in their predatory warfare against their venerable *mother country*, not only plundered the temple of the Irish muses of the most splendid offerings of Irish genius, but in their insatiate rapacity, ravished the very harp of Erin from the inspired hands of music, as she wept in the ruins of Tara, tore from it some of the sweetest strings that ever, under the magic and lightning-tipped fingers of our O'Brodin, O'Regan, M'Cabe, M'Dairy or Carolan, vibrated with the thrilling tones of the melody of the passions and the heart! Has not the voice of literary Europe reproached them for national vanity, in pluming themselves with borrowed feathers, clandestinely plucked from the wings of the Irish songsters; and for clothing the meagre, deformed, and decayed skeleton of their history, in garments stolen from the wardrobes of our learned antiquarians and annalists. Macpherson was certainly a poet whose talents had graduated in the Parnassian college, and, while we deny him the honor due to candor, we cordially concede that those poems, (called Ossian's) to which we award him the full credit of having framed and fabricated, from fragments of Irish poetry, possess traces of genius that would have reflected credit on even the best epic of Homer. No writer of

* "The *Senachies*, (or antiquarian sages,) were men informed in every liberal art and science known in their time. They were poets by name, but philosophers in practice."—LYNCH.

judgment can question Macpherson's intellectual endowments, the expansive range of his imagination, nor his acknowledged skill in arraying epic and heroic themes in the most graceful drapery of pathetic poetry. But why was he so vain, selfish, and silly, as to thrust his false Ossian on public credulity? Why did he make such an obstinate stand in the field of imposture? or with his fungus sponge, and leaden truncheon, essay to efface from the adamantine pillar of our antiquarian renown, the indelible inscription which the immortalizing chisel of HISTORY insculptured upon them, for the admiration and instruction of future ages?

By his own admission, it appears that the modern Scotia was for the period of eleven hundred years without literary records; but at length the sun beams of knowledge, as if by enchantment, dawned upon the torpid intellects of the Scots, and the redoubtable James Macpherson, like a midnight sexton, came forth from the mouldering tomb of Ossian, waving the sepulchral torches, which he ravished from the bard's bier, to illuminate the perennial darkness in which the antiquities of Albania had been shrouded for eleven centuries.* When we come to treat of St. Patrick, we shall advert to the preceding subject again. As to the charge of our having no knowledge of the fine arts before the era of the mission of our patron saint, it is only necessary to observe, in its refutation, that the remains of our druidical temples, display majestic and imposing architecture,—the arabesque ceilings of our ancient caves attest our skill in mosaic and fresco painting, and the crowns, shields, and amulets of our heathen kings and warriors, proclaim to the world, that the pagan sculptors of Ireland were capable of the most exquisite execution of the Grecian art.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The grandsons of Mac Con are elected joint Monarchs of Ireland.—Their reign and death.—Olioll, king of Munster.—Fiacha, the son of Carbre, is raised to the throne.—Is killed in battle by his nephews, the Collas.—Destruction of the palace of Emania, A. D. 336.—Accession of the elder Colla to the throne.—He is deposed and succeeded by Muiredhach.

THE monarch Carbre having fallen in the battle of Gabhra,† as related in a former chapter, the national estates assembled at Tara, and elected the two *Fiathachs* joint sovereigns of Ireland. But scarcely had these princes, who were the grandsons of Mac Con, of

* "I believe that our ancestors for eleven hundred years believed themselves the descendants of the Irish Scots, and that the authorities of Bede and Buchanan, tended to support this erroneous, but popular opinion. Those poems, (Ossian's,) were preserved by oral tradition in the highlands for fifteen hundred years. The whole system of Irish history was fabricated by the monks in the sixth century, when, it appears, *monkish learning, religious virtues, and ascetic austerities flourished in Ireland.*"—*Vide Introduction to Ossian, by James Macpherson, Esq.*

† GABHRA, the scene of this battle, is a town land in the county of Meath.

the house of *Ith*, been invested with regal power, than envy and jealousy severed the bonds of fraternal affection, and filled their hearts with feelings of inveterate resentment and abhorrence against each other. Their irreconcilable difference, could, therefore, only be terminated and decided by the force of arms. In the rencounter which ensued they both were killed. Their death called forth FIACHA STREABHTHUINE,* the son of the monarch Carbre, as a candidate for the sovereignty of Ireland. The national estates raised him to the summit of his wishes. Valiant and enlightened, he was admirably qualified to shed lustre on the throne, and confer happiness on the nation.

Shortly after his accession to supreme power, he appointed his brother Eochaidh, commander-in-chief of the Irish army, into which he introduced the most effective species of discipline. He embodied a legion of troops, composed of the flower of the Irish youth, which, in honor of his great ancestor, king *Cormac Cas*, he designated *Dalgas*. This body of warlike heroes, who were finally annihilated at the battle of Clontarf, were for ages distinguished for their gallantry and chivalrous exploits, seemed as if animated with the spirit of their renowned predecessors, the *Irish Militia*.† The monarch's Queen was a daughter of the Prince of Wales; and the wife of Eochaidh was *Oilean*, princess royal of Scotland, a woman whose beauty was only surpassed by her ambition. By this lady Eochaidh became the father of the three famous COLLAS, whose deeds are such glorious themes for historical eulogium, as well as for the epic and dramatic muses.

Some of the most illustrious names that illuminate Irish history, were descended from the brave Collas. The eldest brother, who was distinguished by the appellation of *Uas*, or the noble, was the common ancestor of the Mac Donnels, both of Ireland and Scotland, as well as of the Doules, Mac Roney's, O'Sheehies, O'Kierins, O'Gniefes, and other septs of high repute in the Milesian genealogical records. To the second brother, called Colla *Crioch*, the families of the Mac Mahon, of Monaghan, the Mac Guires, of Fermanagh, the O'Hanlon's, of Louth, as well as the O'Carrol's, princes of Urial‡ or Orgial, and the Mac Anaigh, Mac Manus, Mac Egan, O'Kelly, O'Madden, O'Nealan, Mac Nulty, &c., owe their great origin.

If the third brother, *Colla Aodh*, had any legitimate issue, we think

* "He was the son of *Carbre Liffeachaire*, the monarch; he was known by this name, because he was bred and had his education in Streabthuine, in Connaught." KEATING.

† "The DALGAS, like the Irish Militia, not only submitted to the military trials of probation, but, by way of pre-eminence, were constantly to be the van-guard in every battle, and the rear in every retreat."—O'HALLORAN.

‡ "After the great battle of *Mullagh Leathdherg*, (now called Market Hill) in the County of Armagh, was fought, the Collas by right of conquest, took possession of Orgial of Urial, a large tract of country, now known by the names of Louth, Armagh, and Monaghan. These valiant brothers made a contract with the monarch of Ireland, A. D. 336, which stipulated for themselves and their descendants, that whenever hostages were demanded from them, if *shackled*, their fetters were to be of pure gold. Hence *Orgial*, from or (Gold,) and *Gial*, a hostage."—LYNCH.

our annalists would not have neglected to record their names and their deeds.

At this juncture, A. D. 309, FEARCHORB was king of Munster, a prince extolled by our historians for his genius and bravery in war, and his prudence and wisdom in governing his people. Several Irish poems are still extant, in which his exploits, wisdom and hospitality are eloquently lauded. He, according to the psalter of Cashel, regularly retained one hundred minstrels in his court, as well as a great number of historians and artists.

He invaded Connaught, where he gained several victories, and compelled the king of that country to cede him a large tract of territory, over which he appointed his son viceroy.

During his reign, the monarch Fiacha was restrained by fear from making any hostile attempts against Munster ; but as soon as he was informed of the demise of his gallant rival, he formed the resolution of invading Munster, and of reducing its inhabitants to servile subjection. The plan thus designed he quickly proceeded to carry into effect. A powerful army, under the command of his son, Prince *Muireadhach*, marched to the frontiers of Munster, where he had orders to encamp, and wait the arrival of the king, with the second division of the forces that were then in the course of organization at Tara. But the young and chivalric prince, animated with martial ardour, and the ambition of having the undivided glory of the conquest of Munster, carried fire and sword at once into the country. *Daire Cearb*, the then king of Munster, after being defeated by the invader in three battles, was necessitated to abandon his capital, Cashel, and retreat to Cork. The monarch was so elated by the conquest achieved by his son, that he raised him to the rank of Generalissimo, and loaded him with other honors and dignities. Eochaidh, provoked and enraged, that a beardless boy should be appointed to a post which he possessed for twenty years, declared that he should revenge the slight and indignity with which the king, his brother, treated him. His sons too, the three Collas, inflamed with envy at the success and valour of prince *Muireadhach*, partook of his resentment, and burned with the desire of vengeance. The glorious achievements of the young prince threw their fame into the shade, whilst it made him the idol of the nation's popularity. The conquest of Munster, at this era, rendered the prince royal as eminent on the summit of renown, as that of Italy rendered the great Napoleon. The monarch of Ireland was on the eve of marching to Munster, when the intelligence of his brother's defection reached him. This unnatural rebellion astonished and grieved him. That his brother and nephews should conspire to deprive him of life and kingdom, for rewarding a heroic son, to whom the whole nation accorded praise and homage, naturally excited sorrow, wonder, and indignation in his bosom. While ruminating on the plans which the exigency of the occasion required to be put in prompt execution, a herald arrived from his brother to challenge him to battle. "Go back," said the king, "to my ungrateful brother, and tell him, that, though my son is absent, I shall meet him in the field of strife, and chastise him and his rebel followers, for this audacious and impious

act of treason!" The king's prime minister, at this epoch, was an eminent druid and prophet, who had gained great reverence and respect in Ireland by his predictions. The monarch, at so momentous a crisis, called upon the seer, to presage the event of the approaching war with the insurgents.

In accordance with the king's request, the prophet told him that it was ordained by fate that if his nephews should be slain in the coming battle, the sovereignty of Ireland would in that event pass from the Heremonian dynasty to that of another race. This prognostication struck the monarch's heart with grief and disappointment. "But," observed the druid, "if their death can be avoided, your majesty's family shall sit for ages on the Irish throne." "That, good druid," replied the king, "is truly consolatory: let me fall nobly in the field, by a brother's or a nephew's hand, so as my son and his posterity may reign in this warlike realm, which our renowned progenitor, Heremon, won by his sword, and bequeathed to his royal race." When he engaged in the conflict with his antagonists, he for some time fought with unconquerable valour, but finding that his troops gave ground, and that the fate of the day was against him, he rushed into the middle of his foes, where he was killed by one of his nephews, in the thirty-first year of his reign.

Thus died the magnanimous Fiacha, a prince in whom some of the noblest virtues of humanity shone in the brightest lustre.* The eldest Colla, immediately after the death of his predecessor, proceeded to Tara, where he was crowned Monarch of Ireland. The army which Prince Muireadhach commanded in Munster, was not of sufficient force to compete with the power of Colla; so that the prince prudently hearkened to the overtures which the ministers of the reigning king made to him, to induce him to resign his right to the throne of Ireland. Colla entered into a treaty with his rival, which provided that *Muireadhach* should rule Connaught, as a tributary Prince, and relinquish all claims to the Irish monarchy. This treaty, which necessity dictated for the interest of both parties, did not remain long inviolate; for at the end of four years, the Prince of Connaught raised a large army, with which he marched to Tara, in order to depose Colla. The monarch, unprepared for so unexpected an attack, abandoned the palace of Tara, and with his aged father, and two brothers, fled from the active pursuit of his triumphant enemy, to Scotland. The king of that country received his brother-in-law and nephews with warm kindness and liberal hospitality. When the Pictish king despaired of being able to restore his nephew to the Irish throne, he sent an embassy to the Irish monarch, to entreat him to pardon his uncle and his cousins, and in the true magnanimity of clemency, to permit them to return

* "Though this monarch made no great improvements in law, or in government in his time, yet we read of no oppression or misrule. Scenes of public action, conquest, and military glory, are indeed the scenes which enliven history the most of any; but they are not the scenes in which wise and good men would choose to pass away their lives. It was greatly and humanely said by Scipio, that he had rather save the life of a single citizen, than destroy a thousand enemies. The reign of this monarch, therefore, though for the most part still and peaceful, yet was happy to himself and all his subjects."—WARNER.

to their native land, as they pined and languished in exile. This appeal melted the heart of the monarch to compassion, and disposed him to yield to the entreaties of the Scottish prince. Orders were, in consequence, issued to the officers stationed on the Irish coast to permit the royal exiles to land, and allow them to proceed, under a proper escort, to Tara. When they appeared at court, the king was highly pleased, as well as much affected, by the contrite manner of their submission. He assured them of his forgiveness, and his determination to reward them according to the rectitude and sincerity of their future conduct. They, charmed and elated at the clemency and generosity of the monarch, resolved to profit by every opportunity that might offer, to efface the stigma of their treason, and to gain a higher ascendancy in the confidence of so humane a prince. Actuated by this feeling, they soon, by their zeal and laudable conduct, obtained such an estimation in the opinion of the king, that he began to regard them as the pillars of his throne, and the shields of his kingdom. To convince them of his esteem, he assigned them territories, and promoted them to the highest offices in the state. But this was not all; he offered them troops to effect any conquest they might wish to achieve in the neighboring countries. Such an offer made to these daring and ambitious princes was too tempting to be refused.

They artfully told the monarch, on finding him in this mood of mind, that the insult and indignity which their common ancestor, Cormac O'Con, had experienced in the court of Emania, from Feargus, king of Ulster, who burned his hair and beard, a century before, remained still without being fully avenged, and that they had long sought for the occasion, which now arrived of sacrificing the great grandson of him who so ignominiously dishonored their famed progenitor.

The king warmly applauded the spirit that inflamed them, and in order to enable them to chastise, if not dethrone the *Irian** King of Ulster, who had rendered himself obnoxious to Muireadhach, in consequence of his having sent forces, by sea, to assist the people of Munster to resist his invasion of that province, he placed at their disposal an army of twenty-one thousand men, at the head of which they marched to Ulster. FEARGUS *Fodha*, King of Ulster, put all the forces he could collect in a posture of defence, and set on foot every opposition to impede the progress of the foe; but in vain, for after a desperate conflict which lasted three days, his army was destroyed, and himself slain, at *Lcath-Dhearg*, in the county of Down. This succession of victories left the people of Ulster no alternative, but an unconditional submission to the conquerors. The victors, not content with subjugating the province to their dominion, and slaying its king in battle, carried their ruthless vengeance still farther, by first plundering the magnificent palace of Emania of all its wealth, treasures and ornaments, and then setting it on fire. "Thus," says O'Halloran, "the bloody battle of Leath-Dhearg, in which the king of Ulster, his principal nobles, and the entire band

* The descendants of Ir, the son of Milesius, from whom Ireland derives its present name, were designated *Irians*.—*Vide 1st Chapter of this History.*

of the Red-Branch fell, was the ruin of the superb palace and stately city of Emania, after flourishing in all their regal pomp, and affording themes to the descriptive muse, for eight centuries;" but—

"Non indignemur mortalia Corpora solvi;
Cernimus exemplis, oppida posse mori!"

The victors now divided Ulster between them, and in order to ensure the support of the monarch of Ireland, in the possession of their conquests, they sent him the arrears of the Ulster tribute, as well as part of the spoils and trophies of their victories. Accompanying the grand embassy, which brought these from the Collas to the palace of Tara, were several of the captive princes and nobles of Ulster, who were fettered in massy chains of gold.* While the Collas were engaged in forming the government of their new dominions, CAOLBHADH, the son of the late king of Ulster, contrived to make his escape from prison to the court of his cousin Aongus Tireach, king of Munster. This prince, on whom was bestowed the appellation of *Tireach*, or the taxer, we are told by our annalists, in consequence of his having subjected Spain and Denmark to his arms, and imposed taxes, and levied contributions from the inhabitants of those countries, received the royal refugee with every mark of distinction, kindness, and honor. Aongus thought now that the moment was arrived for gratifying his ambition, and for avenging the wrongs which he and his people had experienced from the monarch of Ireland, when he invaded Munster. He, therefore, promised the Ulster prince the most potent aid, not only to recover his hereditary dominions, but to push off the monarch Muireadhach from the throne. The army of Munster was speedily put in motion, as well as the troops of the king of Connaught, which combined forces marched almost to the gates of Tara, before the king of Ireland opposed them with an efficient resistance. The belligerents, by mutual consent, resolved to decide their pretensions to the crown, by the result of a battle. In the engagement, which took place in the vicinity of Tara, Muireadhach was killed, in the thirtieth year of his reign, and his army routed. The conqueror made his triumphal entry into Tara, where the Druids solemnly, on the stone of destiny, inaugurated him monarch of Ireland. But his reign was short, for ere a year had expired, he was killed in battle, by the hand of his successor, Eochaidh, the son of Muireadhach, the monarch.

* "To load prisoners of royal blood and noble rank with golden chains, was not only a custom among the ancient Irish, but among the Persians and Macedonians. When Alexander captured Parus, he caused him to be shackled in chains of gold, and treated 'like a king.' Darius, after the battle of Arbela, when treacherously betrayed by the Governor of Bactriana, was bound by the traitor in a similar manner. Many of the Roman conquerors, while making their triumphal entry into Rome, were followed by royal captives wearing fetters of gold. In Ireland these chains, many of which have been found emboweled in the sites of palaces and camps, were fabricated in the finest taste of workmanship; a fact, that adds another corroboration to the million of proofs, which attest the authenticity of the history of ancient Ireland."—HUTCHINSON.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Accession of Eochaidh to the throne.—His endeavor to extort contributions from Leinster frustrated.—His reign and death.—The reign and death of the Monarch Criomthan, A. D. 353.

Eochaidh, the vanquisher of the last king, *Caolbhadh*, no sooner reached the palace of Tara, than the national representatives saluted him monarch. The popularity of his father Muireadhach gave him a passport to the partiality and favor of the Irish people. During his administration in Connaught, as viceroy, he espoused the princess royal of Munster, *Munig Fion*, (the fair,) daughter of Fiachadh, the king of that province. By this lady he became the father of four sons, who were named *Brian*, *Fiachre*, *Fergus* and *Olioll*. From the first two princes of this issue were descended the future kings of Connaught, who our historians and genealogists distinguished by the patronymic appellation of "*Hy Brunes*" and "*Hi Fiachres*." The queen of Eochaidh died shortly after his accession to the crown, when he again married *Carrina*, the daughter of the Prince of Wales, who gave birth to the famed and illustrious hero, *Nial*, of the nine hostages, the great progenitor of the O'Neils, or Hynials, O'Donnells, Colemans, Quins, O'Dalys, M'Aulays, M'Geoghegans, O'Molloys, O'Kindelins, Foxes, M'Loughlins, and several other branches that once adorned and beautified our genealogical tree, ere the Saxon invaders eradicated it from the native soil in which it had so long flourished and luxuriated. Eochaidh, to replenish his exchequer, had recourse to the stale attempt of imposing a tax on Leinster. For the purpose of enforcing the payment of the required tribute, he marched to the frontiers of that province, with a large army of native troops and Welsh auxiliaries. The king of Leinster, *Eana Kinsellagh*,* unable, single-handed, to oppose the force that threatened himself and his people with ruin, applied for assistance to *Lugha-lamh-dhearg*, (or of the bloody hand,) a name bestowed on him in consequence of that emblem being painted on his ensign. Lugha, being a warlike and ambitious prince, rejoiced in having an opportunity of appeasing a grudge which he owed for some cause, to Eochaidh, promptly proceeded with his army to the camp of Eana. The monarch became alarmed for the success of his expedition, when he saw the formidable array which was to contend with him. In this extremity he despatched messengers to Connaught, for the purpose of invoking the assistance of that province, to which, in the event of compliance, he promised to cede the county of Clare, as the price of its alliance with him. The Connacians, covetous to possess that territory, lost no time in sending the required reinforcement to Eochaidh. Judging now that he was able to strike a decisive blow, he led on his army to the attack. The onset was fierce and furious, as both armies were brave and

* "Called *Censalach*, (which means in Irish, the fool head) in consequence of his having killed a Druid, after the battle of *Cruachan* Claonta, who had given him insolence."—O'FLAHERTY.

resolute. For hours victory inclined to neither side ; but at length Lugha and Eana made a combined and powerful charge of spears on the monarch's centre, which they compelled to give ground. This partial advantage animated the hopes of the allied princes, without depressing those of Eochaidh ; for, rallying with renewed vigor, he regained the position which he had lost. Both armies, during the night, reposed upon their arms in the field of battle. As soon as the dawn of the morning afforded light, the engagement was renewed. Never did courage and valour more signally display themselves than in that terrible conflict, to which the intervention of another night put a short period. The desperate strife and emulous struggle of heroes were resumed on the third morning, with an increased spirit of gallantry. For fifteen days, we are told, they thus combated, until at length, after the most sanguinary succession of battles, the monarch's army was reduced to a skeleton.

Eochaidh, foiled and frustrated in his designs of conquest and exaction, was necessitated to agree to the most humiliating terms of a peace, by which he had to relinquish for himself and his successors all claims to tribute from Leinster.

The monarch returned to Tara, with a broken spirit and a discomfited army, while the victorious King of Munster invaded Connaught, which he reduced to the most complete subjection. To reward his officers and soldiers, Lugha parcelled out to them, as military fiefs, for which they were to render sword service, when required, the entire county of Clare. Some of these feudatory tenors existed in that country until the days of Elizabeth.*

It may not be unamusing to our readers to detail the occurrence, which took place at the battle, that discomfited the army of Eochaidh, as from it the once princely family of Kinsellagh derived their name.† Among the prisoners who were brought in chains to the tent of Eana, the King of Leinster, was *Ceadmuithach*, the arch druid of Tara, who had patriotically distinguished himself, not only by his arms, in the past engagement, but by his poetic eloquence in stimulating and exciting the warriors of the monarch to courage and intrepidity.

No sooner was the gallant and patriotic sage introduced into the presence of the King of Leinster, than he began to chide the soldiers for not putting him to death. The druid, provoked and enraged at the inhuman and irreverent expressions which fell from Eana, felt all the enthusiasm of prophetic inspiration, as he burst out in the following predictive philippic :—" King of Leinster, if the life of the priest of our luminous Deity must be sacrificed to your cowardly

* " By the peace made by Lugha and his ally, the king of Leinster, with the monarch and the Connacians, it was covenanted, that every village in *Leath Cuin*, (the patrimonial territory of the Irish monarchs) Connaught and Ulster should pay the conquerors an ounce of pure gold. So potent was the power of the king of Munster, from whom Mr. O'CONNELL, the [now, 1835] great mover and agitator of the Catholic Board, is lineally descended, that he fearlessly dictated to Eochaidh, and carried his boldness so far as to force him to banish all foreigners from the kingdom."—*Lawder's Chart of Irish History—Dublin*, 1814.

† " The O'Kinsellaghs, descended from king Caithir-More, were for many ages kings of Leinster."—LYNCH.

vengeance, I am ready to part with it as becomes a man of my exalted order. Death can, it is true, annihilate my body ; but as to my spirit, it is a spark of heaven that will live to give evidence of your cruelty and injustice before the celestial tribunal, where your soul must soon stand as a criminal. The sun of your earthly glory is gradually sinking, and yonder field shall be soon moistened with your heart's blood. Would to heaven you were never born ! for a prince of your family, (Dermod Macmurrough,) by his pride and his lasciviousness, shall bring ruin and disgrace on his country, and help to fetter her in the chains of foreign despotism ! Your descendants, haughty prince ! will become bondsmen and slaves, and servile servitors to their oppressive invaders. They will wander forth through the world as outcasts and exiles, ere the lapse of many ages, and posterity shall designate them to reproach, and execrate your infamous memory, for wickedly slaying a servant of the Most High, *Censallagh*, (filthy head,) a designation that will remain as a blot on the escutcheon of your family's nobility, and an eternal stigma on every one that bears your name. Take my life, tyrant ! I lay it down cheerfully ! but, alas ! my poor country ! I must sigh in the last struggle of expiring nature, when I read, in the visions which futurity crowds upon my sight, of the ages of injustice and intolerable miseries which you, dear native land of heroes and sages ! are destined to endure from foreign task-masters." His words kindled the king's choler to such a rage of indignation, that he ingloriously pierced him through the body with his spear.* That the prognostication of the venerable seer, preserved in Molloy's miscellanies, and which now, for the first time, appears in the English language, has been literally verified with a fearful vengeance, is, for Ireland, a melancholy fact, that nearly seven centuries of English despotism and persecution have inscribed on the lasting pillars of history, while they still excite the sympathy and the indignation of all the reading world. Dr. O'Halloran says, on what authority we know not, that Lugh, King of Munster, passed over into Scotland, and drove the Romans out of that country. "Ammianus Marcellinus," observes he, "the historian, and the poet Claudian, who flourished after the era in question, bear ample testimonies of these invasions, and of the distress the Britons were reduced to by them. Claudian celebrates the successes which Theodosius gained over these allies in the following lines :

"—————Maduerunt Saxone fuso
Orcades ; incaluit Pictorum sanguine Thule ;
Scotorum Cumulus flevit glacialis IERNE."

At this juncture, A. D. 267, the monarch Eochaidh died peaceably at Tara, in the eighth year of his reign. This sovereign had many redeeming qualities to atone for his inordinate ambition and love of

* "The family of this prince was afterwards known by the name of *Vibh Censallagh* :—the word *salach* means in the Irish, foul or reproachful, a character that this royal line of Leinster could never wipe off. This king Eana Censallagh, was a fortunate and martial prince, and the most powerful and formidable of any of the petty princes of the island. The Psalter of Cashel, whose credit and authority will admit of no dispute, has it upon record, that the aforesaid Eana gained fifteen victories in Connaught and Meath."—KEATING,

military glory. He was generous and merciful, and during his reign the laws were administered with justice, clemency, and impartiality.

The national estates, as soon as the throne became vacant, proceeded to elect a new monarch. Their choice fell on *Criomthan*, a Munster prince, of the dynasty of Heber. The success of his election is imputed by our historians to the power and influence of his cousin Lugh, King of Munster, by whose intrigues, the sons of Eochaidh were, for the present, set aside. His queen was *Fidheang*, the daughter of the king of Connaught, by whom it does not appear that he had any issue. This prince, having fought, with honorable distinction, in all the wars of Lugh, had a passion for military fame. Shortly after his gaining possession of the crown, the Romans made another incursion into Albania, where they committed great ravages and licentious excesses.

The people, oppressed and harassed by the invaders, implored the Irish king, as their natural ally, to come to their aid. He joyfully and promptly complied with their entreaties. An army was raised, and a fleet fitted out with rapid celerity.

Prior, however, to the embarkation of the monarch, he, by the consent of the national assembly, appointed Connal, the son of his relative and benefactor, Lugh, regent of Ireland.

About a year before this epoch, on the death of Lugh, his son, Connal, through the assistance and interest of Criomthan, was invested with the sovereignty of Munster, in despite of Core, the rightful heir, and in contravention of the will of *Olioll Ollum*, made in the second century, which stipulated that the posterity of both his sons, Eogan and Cormac, should alternately reign kings of Munster, and possess the crown in regular succession. The adherents of Prince Core, who was the son of Luigh, and the direct and legitimate descendant of Eogan, in conjunction with the great majority of the people of Munster, caused a strong remonstrance to be presented to the national convention, then (A. D. 370) assembled at Tara, in which they feelingly complained of the illegal infraction of the will of Olioll, and boldly arraigned the partiality and injustice of the supreme monarch of Ireland, in depriving Core of his unalienable right. This manifesto intimidated Criomthan, and extorted from him a tardy concession to the demands of Munster. Impatient to embark for Scotland, and anxious to allay all causes of discontent at home, during his absence abroad, he convened an assembly of the estates of Munster to decide on the claims of the competitors to the crown of that kingdom.

The members who composed this convention were men of moral courage, justice, and honor, who, in their impartial decision, swayed by equitable fairness alone, and regardless of the threats and frowns of the monarch, unanimously awarded the crown to Core, the rightful heir. But, while we commend the energy and equity of their conduct, we should not omit bestowing the meed of merited eulogium on the promptitude with which Connal, in compliance with the decision of the assembly, laid down a crown which the law did not entitle him to wear. This amicable adjustment of the disputes

in Munster removed all fears for the tranquillity of the kingdom from the mind of the monarch. He, therefore, set out on his expedition to Scotland, with confidence in the allegiance of his people, and with hopes that victory and conquest would crown his arms. On his arrival the Picts and a large body of Saxons, who fled from the despotism of the Romans, enrolled themselves under the Irish standard. Criomthan, finding himself now at the head of a numerous and well disciplined army, commenced the attack on the Roman legions, whom, after an obstinate struggle in several battles, he ultimately drove into Britain.

The Romans having retreated to the middle of Britain,* the victor resolved to give their power elsewhere another blow, in a more vulnerable point. To accomplish that purpose he augmented his army by levies of troops in Ireland and Scotland, with which he made a descent on the maritime coast of Gaul, where he attacked the Romans in their very camp, which he compelled them to abandon, after leaving behind all their equipages, spoils, and trophies.

He continued in Gaul nearly the period of a year, during which he fought many battles with the Romans, and in the most of them was successful. It is recorded by Rapin that the Irish monarch was obliged to halt in his career of conquest in Gaul, on receiving intelligence that Maximus Magnus was preparing an expedition in Britain, for the invasion of Ireland. This news determined the monarch to return to his beloved country, and protect her shores from the aggression of the foe. His triumphal entry into Tara, has been represented as the most magnificent spectacle that ever had been witnessed in Ireland.

It is related by some of our historians, that it was at the request of an Irish petty prince, who had deserted to the Romans, and thus proved a traitor to his king and country, that Maximus determined to invade Ireland. MOORE, in his History of Ireland, in narrating the treason of the deserter, has made the following striking and apposite reflection on Irish traitors:—

“It would hardly be possible, perhaps, in the whole compass of history, to find a picture more pregnant with the future, more prospectively characteristic, than this of a recreant Irish prince, in the camp of the Romans, proffering his traitorous services to the stranger, and depreciating his country as an excuse for betraying her. It is, indeed, mournful to reflect that, at the end of nearly eighteen centuries, the features of this national portrait should remain so very little altered; and that with a change only of scene

* “The extreme vanity of the Scots of Albany, in presuming to arrogate to the North Britons only the glory of these days in exclusion of their Irish ancestors, has been so fully exposed by the most respectable writers of Britain and Ireland, that I should deem it an insult to the understanding of my readers, to say any thing further on this head, than bravely to remark, that to a contemplative mind it must appear very extraordinary how the North Britons should, in early days acquire so great a power as to be able to attack, and, for near four centuries, keep the whole power of South Britain, aided by Rome, on the defensive rather than the offensive; whilst in subsequent periods, almost to our own days, they were seldom able to oppose the British Saxons alone!”—O’HALLORAN.

from the tent of the Roman general to the closet of the English minister or viceroy, the spectacle of an Irishman playing the game of his country's enemies, has been, even in modern history, an occurrence by no means rare."

But his glory and his triumphs, with his life, were now closed by the cruel and unnatural hands that should have guarded and caressed him. His own sister, a proud and ambitious woman, with the view of having her son's brow encircled with the royal diadem of Ireland, administered a cup of poison to the monarch, while he was on a visit in her apartment, at Tara. Our annalists say, that the poison was so deadly and malignant, that when the vile woman applied the cup to her lips, pretending to drink to her brother, the very fumes of it produced her death almost as soon as that of the king. Such was the fate of the brave and magnanimous Criomthan, in the third year of his reign. Had not treachery cut him off, his exploits and his virtues would have reached as exalted glory as any Milesian prince ever attained. His very name was a terror to the Romans; and had he but lived a few years longer, it is probable, he would have achieved their utter expulsion from Britain, Caledonia, and Gaul.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Nial of the Nine Hostages is elected Monarch of Ireland.—He sails to Scotland, to assist the Irish colony.—Drives the Romans into Britain.—Changes the name of Albania into Scotia Minor, in honor of Scotia, the wife of his great ancestor, Milesius.

THE death of the chivalrous monarch Criomthan, in the barbarous and treacherous manner narrated in the last chapter, called forth several candidates to compete for the crown of Ireland. Eana, king of Leinster, with the view of securing the prize by force of arms, marched to Tara, and took possession of the palace, and surrounded the house of the national assembly with his troops. This violent procedure gave great offence to the northern princes who marshalled all their forces, and placed them under the command of Prince Nial, the son of a former monarch, Eochaidh.

With this army, Nial marched to the neighborhood of Tara, where he halted, and despatched heralds to Eana, threatening him with vengeance, unless he evacuated the palace, and withdrew with all his soldiers, three leagues from Tara, in order that the national estates might not be controlled, or overawed, in the exercise of their elective rights.

Core, king of Munster, came also to the vicinity of Tara, with an army to support his pretensions to the throne. Eana, however, on the arrival of the heralds, judged it prudent to acquiesce to the requisition of Prince Nial.

The election now proceeded, unbiassed and unrestricted by the

presence of an army; and, after a long discussion of the respective merits of the three candidates, the majority of the princes and electors declared in favor of Nial, the son of Eochaidh, of the dynasty of Heremon. As soon as this decision was announced to the successful candidate, through the heralds, he made his triumphal entry into Tara, where the druids placed the crown upon his head, A. D. 380. Core and Eana, grieved and disappointed by the election of their rival, united their armies, and boldly proclaimed their determination of deposing the reigning monarch, notwithstanding that he was constitutionally elected by the representatives of the people. These illegal and violent proceedings only added strength to the power of Nial, and served to enlist the affections of the whole nation in his favor.

Hostilities were resorted to, and after a series of sanguinary conflicts, the pretenders were totally defeated and discomfited, and compelled to submit to such terms of peace as the monarch thought proper to dictate. By the terms of this memorable treaty, Core, King of Munster, and Eana, King of Leinster, recognized the election of Nial as fair and constitutional, and bound themselves, by hostages, to pay an annual tribute to the monarch during his reign. Nial, on the other hand, well pleased at the result of the treaty, presented the Kings of Leinster and Munster with 1000 war horses, 500 suits of silver and steel armour, 190 gold rings, and fifty golden cups, bearing suitable inscriptions, to commemorate this treaty of peace.*

Nial, being now firmly seated on the throne, and undismayed in the full exercise of his regal authority, began to form projects of foreign conquest.

At this juncture, the Roman power was on the wane in Britain, so that the Picts, forgetful of the protection which several of the Irish monarchs afforded them from the incursions of the Romans, began to view the *Dalriadan* colony with extreme envy and jealousy, and to concert plans for expelling these Irish settlers out of the country. Actuated with these feelings, the Picts assembled an army to invade the territories of the Irish colonists. The Irish for a while defended their possessions with formidable valour, and gallantly repelled several attacks of the invading foe. But the Picts, resolved to accomplish their purpose, called in the Anglo Saxons to their aid. With this reinforcement they succeeded in driving the Irish into their strong holds. The colonists, reduced to this extremity, sent ambassadors to the Irish Monarch to implore him, as the sovereign of their mother country, to send them aid to rescue them from the danger which environed their lives and properties. The monarch was greatly affected by the relation, which the ambassadors of the aggressions and devastations of the Pictish invaders; and in the fulness of his compassion, he assured them that

* "It was the custom of the Irish, in controverted elections, when a peace was made, that the acknowledged monarch made presents to his former antagonists. Thus, *Maolsachlin*, King of Leinster, surrendered the diadem of Ireland to Brian Boroihme, he received from the new monarch a present of horses and arms, and his attendants were likewise rewarded."—O'HALLORAN.

the ingratitude of the Picts should be visited with severe retributive justice, as he was resolved to command the army in person, which was destined to reduce to his subjection, the country of the Picts. With these assurances from Nial, the ambassadors hastened back to the Irish colonists, to cheer them with the gladdening tidings that powerful aid and succors were at hand. The monarch, with a large fleet and army, in accordance to his promise, speedily made a descent on the Caledonian coast, and immediately after landing, he commenced his march to the Pictish camp, which, on his approach, they suddenly abandoned, leaving behind all their equipage and spoils for the conqueror, and fled into the mountains.

The wandering fugitives, despairing of success, sent an embassy to the Irish king to sue for peace. Nial, like a magnanimous hero, readily accepted the olive, and requested that nine of the principal chiefs of the Picts should be delivered into his hands, as hostages for the faithful performance of the treaty then in progress of negotiation. Hence this illustrious monarch is distinguished, in our annals, on which his exploits shed an undying lustre, by the appellation of "*Nial of the Nine Hostages*.*" This famous treaty stipulated, that the *Dalriada*, or Irish colony, should not owe any allegiance, or pay tribute to any sovereign except their protector, the monarch of Ireland; that the Picts should forever pay an annual tribute to the Irish sovereigns,† and that in order that the whole country should be dependant on Ireland, and acknowledge her power and conquest, *Albania* should ever after be called *Scotia Minor*. In those days the favorite name of Ireland was *Scotia*, so that Scotland is indebted to us for her present name, as she is for letters, government, religion, and nobility of blood.‡ Hume, in adverting to the origin of his country, observes, with his characteristic caution, and extreme reluctance to acknowledge *Scotia* the "venerable mother of modern Scotland," "that in every ancient language Scotland means only the country north of the Friths of Clyde and Forth. I shall not (he adds) make a parade of literature

* "The troops which this great Irish prince led to Albania, (Scotland) were in valour and discipline the best then in Europe."—VALLANCEY.

† We have the authority of Cambden, Whitaker, and Bishop Usher, that Scotland continued to pay this tribute to Ireland, down to the tenth century. M'Curtin, in his biography of Brian the Great, says, that if that hero had not fallen at the battle of Clontarf, he would have forced Malcom II. to pay the arrears of tribute which the modern Scotland owed the Irish crown.—AUTHOR.

‡ "The occasion of this name was in honor and memory of the princess *Scotia*, the daughter of Pharaoh Nectonebus, king of Egypt, who was the wife of Milesius, king of Spain. From this monarch the *Dalriads* descended, and therefore they made choice that the island should be called *Scotia Major*, rather than *Erin*, *Hibernia*, or any other appellation. The authority of the learned Cambden might be insisted upon in confirmation of this account, for he asserts in his Chronicle of Britain that Scotland was called *Scotia Minor*, and Ireland *Scotia Major*, and declares that there is no certain evidence upon record, to prove that the inhabitants of Scotland were known by the name of Scots before the time of Constantine the Great. It is evident from the ancient records of the island, that the country of Scotland was known by the name of *Albania*, until the reign of the Great Nial of the Nine Hostages. The kingdom of Scotland was styled *Albania* from *Albanus*, the third son of Brutus, to whom the country was assigned by lot, when the father was making provision for his children."—KEATING.

to prove it, *because I do not find the point is disputed by the Scots themselves.*" To establish, by additional testimony, the facts that the Scots are descendants of the Irish, their own historian, *Buchanan*, stamps authenticity upon the truth of our annalists, by the assertion, that "the Irish and the Scotch are from one common origin, since the natives of Ireland, and the colonies sent from thence at various periods into Scotland, were originally called Scots. In order to distinguish between the Irish and those Scots, they began to call those transplanted Irish by the name of Albanian Scots." Nial, having brought the Picts thus under his subjection, and established the Irish colony on an independent basis, came to the determination of invading Gaul, and of wresting a portion of that country from the Romans. To embody an army competent to gain success in the daring enterprise, he caused a levy of troops to be made in Ireland and Scotia. In a short time he saw a mighty host of troops under his standard, with which he embarked for the continent.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Nial ravages France, and drives the Romans beyond the Loire.—Seizes on a great many captives, among whom were St. Patrick and his two sisters.—The Saxons prevail on him to assist them in resisting the aggressions of the Romans, under the Emperor Maximus.—He returns to Britain in consequence, and forces the Romans to retreat to Wales.—Eochaidh, the son of Eana, captures the palace of Tara.—The conquering Nial brings his victorious army back to his kingdom, with which he devastates Leinster, and takes Eochaidh, the king, a prisoner, whom he causes to be chained to a rock.—The captive Prince kills his jailors and effects his escape to Scotland.—Partition of Munster.—Nial's Will, and an account of his family.—His exploits, and death in France.

THE army which Nial transported to Gaul, in valour, discipline, and numerical strength, was superior to any force that Ireland had ever before sent into a foreign country. It consisted of the best troops of Ireland and Scotland, commanded by the bravest officers of the nobility and chivalry of both nations. The unexpected descent of such an army on the coast of Brittany, headed by a monarch whose gallantry was only surpassed by his martial genius, threw the Roman legions into consternation and dismay.

Nial was no sooner disembarked, than he began to act on the offensive. The Romans assumed a bold attitude, and stood the shock of the fierce attack of the Irish army with their characteristic courage and steadiness; but, after an obstinate struggle, they were defeated and compelled to retreat to the city of Tours, whither the victor rapidly pursued them. Not deeming their force adequate to the defence of that fortress, they abandoned it on the night after the Irish monarch had arrived at the gates. The citizens opened their gates, and threw themselves on the mercy of the conqueror.

Nial found here, every thing that his army could stand in need of. This city was captured, according to O'Flaherty, the most cor-

rect chronologist among our historians, A. D. 387.* To secure the fulfilment of the terms which Nial prescribed to the citizens, he required two hundred of the children of the notables of Bretagne as hostages, whom he had, immediately after their delivery into his hands, transported to Ireland. Among these were St. Patrick, then in the sixteenth year of his age, as well as his two sisters, whose names were Lupida and Dererca.

Nial, in order to follow up his victories, and to give a death-blow to the Roman power in Gaul, resolved to pursue them beyond the Loire ; but, just as he was on the point of marching from Tours, he received a letter from *Gabhran*, the prince of the Dalriada, acquainting him that Maximus had been proclaimed emperor by his soldiers in Britain, and that he was about passing over to Gaul with his whole army, to assert his claim to the sovereignty of the empire. This letter, which suggested to the monarch the facility with which he might, in the absence of the Romans, make himself master of all Britain, induced him to abandon his project of following the Romans. The contiguity of England to his own kingdom, rendering it a much more desirable conquest for his arms than the French provinces, prevailed upon him to relinquish, for a time, his designs there, and to return to North Britain. He left, however, on his departure, a strong garrison in Tours, to which he purposed returning as soon as Britain should be reduced to his subjection. After he had landed in Scotland, he commenced his campaign against Britain, by razing the Roman wall. In his march through England, multitudes of the Saxons crowded to his standard, and solicited him to become their sovereign. But, as he was proceeding in this career of triumph, he learned that Eochaidh, king of Leinster, the son of his former rival, Eana, headed an insurrection, and that he was marching with the disaffected towards Tara.

This intelligence, soon decided the course he was to take, to crush rebellion. He immediately retraced his steps to his fleet, and embarked for Ireland, where he landed after a short passage. In the mean time, Eochaidh seized on the palace of Tara, and violently entered the house of the national assembly, with an armed band, to compel the representatives to declare him supreme monarch of Ireland. This illegal procedure, instead of shaking the members with alarm, on the contrary, roused their indignation and courage. A son of the arch-druid rose up in his place, and denounced the unconstitutional conduct of Eochaidh, in acrimonious terms. He lauded the glory and exploits of Nial, in a lofty strain of eloquence, and pointed out to the attention of the assembly, the *eclat* which his achievements had imparted to the national glory, which they served to immortalize. He further insisted, that Eochaidh, not having been yet installed a knight of the *Gradh-Gaoisge*, or golden collar, an order, without which, no Milesian prince could aspire to the crown of Ireland, that he was, in consequence, incapacitated by the

* "The Irish Scots, under Nial the Great, wasted and destroyed many provinces of Britain, in opposition to the power of the Romans. They attempted to possess themselves of the northern part of Britain ; and at length, having driven out the old inhabitants, these Irish seized upon the country, and settled in it."—JOCELYN.

defect from taking the reigns of the regal authority.* These observations made a deep impression on the minds of the assembly, and turned the current of popular opinion from the pretensions of Eochaidh, who, despairing of success, consented to evacuate the palace, and return back to his own territory of Leinster.

Eochaidh, disguising his deadly enmity against the son of the arch-druid, whose eloquence had so forcibly tended to frustrate the designs of his usurpation, invited him, and several others of the national representatives, to a banquet, which he had ordered to be prepared in the palace, on the eve of his departure from it. The devoted personage attended, but on his return home from the feast, he was assassinated. Though our historians do not directly charge the king of Leinster, with the commission of the atrocious deed, we still think that he was implicated in it. The monarch, Nial, inflamed with the desire of vengeance, committed dreadful excesses in the course of his march from Wexford to Tara. Blood and fire marked his pathway. Never did ruin and devastation signalize themselves by a more destructive system of ravage and spoliation. Nial, in this instance, gave loose to a spirit of licentiousness, which must stand against him as a disgrace, on the pillars of his immortality.

As he approached Tara, he espied the troops of Eochaidh marching in an opposite direction, and pointing his sword towards them, he exclaimed, "Now Eochaidh must be either a dead man, or a living captive! Soldiers, your monarch has confidence in your fidelity. You, that enchained victory so often to the Scotian standard in Albania, Britain, and Gaul, will not, in your own native soil, yield to dastard rebels. Your monarch and general, will either die in the field, or live like his illustrious ancestor, Heremon, sole Monarch of Ireland."

His address excited the feelings of the soldiers, to the highest pitch of enthusiasm, and thus actuated, the king led them on to attack Eochaidh, and the forces of Leinster. The assault was irresistible: Eochaidh's troops were annihilated in the first charge, and himself taken prisoner. This battle was fought at Dunshaughlin, now a handsome village in the county of Meath, fourteen miles north of Dublin.

When the unfortunate Eochaidh, was brought before Nial, the latter evinced very little of the magnanimous spirit of the true hero; for he gave himself up to the influence of his anger, and loaded the unfortunate captive with the most vulgar abuse. After inveighing against the royal captive, in the severest terms of contumely, he ordered a massy iron hoop to be clasped round his body, to which was appended a heavy chain, that was to bind him to a perforated crag of a rock, near Tara.

* "His not having received the Equestrian Order, defeated his object. The law of Ireland regarding candidates for the monarchy, required that a prince being of the royal blood of Milesius, was not sufficient without he was fully invested with the Knighthood of the *Gradh-Gaoisge*, or the regal order of chivalry."—*Illustrations of the History of Ireland*.

"The first order of chivalry in ancient Ireland, was the *Niah Nase*, or Knights of the Golden Collar, and this order was peculiar to the blood royal, as without it no prince could presume to become a candidate for the monarchy. The truth of this is exemplified in the history of Eochaidh, King of Leinster."—O'FLAHERTY,

To carry the sentence passed by the monarch, on his unfortunate prisoner, into execution, nine of the most athletic soldiers of the royal guard were nominated. But as these gigantic men were about fastening the chain to the rock, Eochaidh, who was renowned for his bodily strength and heroic courage, wrested it out of their hands, and attacked them so bravely with it, that he killed five of them, and so disabled the other four, as to render them incompetent to offer any opposition to his escape. Having thus effected his liberation from an ignominious captivity, he precipitately fled to Scotland, where his cousin, Gabhran, the prince of the Dalriada, received him with kindness and hospitality.

As soon as Nial heard that Gabhran had afforded an asylum to Eochaidh, he sent a herald to command that Dalriadian prince, to have him loaded with chains, and delivered up to a guard of soldiers that accompanied the herald, to take charge of the devoted Eochaidh. The laws of hospitality, and the feelings of honor, alike persuaded Gabhran, to refuse a compliance with the requisition of the Irish king.

Nial, although much chagrined by the peremptory refusal of Gabhran, to accede to his special solicitation, was still influenced by policy, to conceal his resentment. At this juncture, when internal revolt dare not raise its head in Ireland, Nial was preparing, on a grand and extensive scale, another expedition for France; and knowing that Gabhran could supply a most powerful contingent to his army, he affected the most friendly wishes towards that prince, and improved every opportunity of cultivating the amicable relations that subsisted, between the sovereign and the vassal.

He also prevailed upon several of the Anglo Saxon princes, to accompany him to France, with their troops, where he promised them a rich harvest of glory and spoils.* The immense fleet of the Irish monarch, was collected in a Scottish port, from whence it sailed for the coast of Gaul, in the beginning of the year 401 of the Christian era.†

* "Nial, being encouraged by the number of his captives, and the success of his arms, not only in Scotland, England, and France, resolved upon a second expedition to the latter country; but not thinking his own army sufficient of itself for such an enterprise, he concert measures with his relative and feudatory prince of the Dalriada, as well as with the Saxon chieftains of Britain, to join him upon the Gaelic coast, and to share the invasion and the plunder with the Irish."—DR. WARNER.

† "Macpherson, and his bottle holder, the recreant Ledwich, have ignorantly asserted, that these invasions of the Irish, were from currachs, or boats made of leather and wicker-work. But, though our own historians should be overlooked on this occasion, surely the testimony of Roman writers, should be decisive in our favor. How else are we to explain the fine compliment which *Claudian*, under the name of Britain, pays to his patron, *Stilicho*, the commander of the Romans in Britain, during the first part of the reign of Theodosius.

*"Me quoque vicinis pereuntem gentibus inquit,
Munivet Stilicho, totam cum Scotis Jernam
Mavit;—et infesto spumavit remige Thetys.
Illius affectum curtis, ne bella timerem
Scotia nec Pictum tremerem, nec littore toto
Prospicerem dubiis venturum Saxona ventis."*

At no time were oars used in currachs, but all antiquity proclaims that large galleys and ships of war, were never without them."—*M^r Dermott's History of Ireland.*

At this juncture, A. D. 405, there was a serious dispute between the Connacians and the princes of Munster, relative to the county of Clare, which both parties claimed as their territory. The competitors, however, by the advice of the Arch-Druids of Munster and Connaught, agreed to submit their respective claims to the decision of the monarch Nial. The princes of Munster, in order to dispose him to their interest, furnished four regiments of the *Dalgas*, as their quota to the expedition then destined to conquer France. The appearance, armour, clothing, and discipline of these troops, excited the admiration and gratitude of the monarch. In a speech from the throne to the national assembly, he stated, "that the necessity of adding to the strength of the nation, by promoting concord and unanimity, influenced him to decide, that the rival of Munster, *Eana*, Arigithach, the son of Connell, of the *Dalgas* race and house of Heber, and Eugenius, his cousin, should divide Munster into two principalities: that South Munster should belong to Eana, and North Munster, including the county of Clare, should form the dominion of Eugenius." This adjudication was received by the people of Munster, with joy, but with an expression of indignation by the Connacians, who became loud in their reprobation of Nial's partiality. Nial now informed the national estates, that by the concurrence of the council of his ministers, he had appointed his son, *Maine*, *Ard Comhairce*, or sole regent of Ireland, with full powers to govern the nation, during his absence in France. To this chieftain he assigned, as a royal domain, that tract of country, that is now comprehended in the county of Longford, which remained in the possession of his posterity, the O'Farrell's, M'Gawleys, O'Quins, and O'Dalys, until the invasion of Henry II. This great and powerful sovereign, whose exploits raised the military glory of Ireland, to the highest pinnacle of fame, had eight legitimate sons, "four of whom," says Dr. O'Halloran, "remained in Meath and its environs; the others acquired possessions in the north. The issue of these eight sons, have been distinguished by the titles of the Northern and Southern Hy-Nials, from the situation of their territories, with respect to each other. Maine, Loaghaire, Connal-Criomthan, and Fiacha, with their posterities, settled in Meath, and these are called the southern Hy-Nials; sometimes Clana-Coleman, from Coleman the Great; sometimes Cincal Slaine, from Aodh Slaine. The posterity of Eogan, Connell Galban, Carbre, and Eana, are the northern Hy-Nials." On this occasion, he read his will to the national assembly, by which he bequeathed lands and moveables to all his children.

Eogan, the great progenitor of the illustrious O'Nials, names that are associated with the proudest events that embellish our annals, while they shine on as lights to chivalric enterprise, and unquenchable mementos of bravery and heroism, was allotted, as his patrimony, the entire county of Tyrone. Connell's portion, consisted of the present county of Donegal, which is still called, in the Irish language, *Tir Connell*, or the country of Connell. In after times, the descendants of this prince assumed the name of O'Donnell, in honor of one of their ancestors. Carbre, the eldest son of the

monarch Nial, from whom the M'Guires of Fermanagh, were descended, was put in possession of the tracts of country bordering on Lough Erne. Nial, having thus settled the internal affairs of his kingdom, sailed to Scotland, from which country, with a numerous fleet and mighty army, he proceeded to France, where he safely landed without opposition.*

Nial, meeting no enemy on the French coast to retard his progress, commenced his march for Tours, where the Irish garrison was then reduced to the greatest extremity, by the besieging Romans. But on the approach of the Irish monarch, with his vast army, the enemy hastily abandoned their works, and retreated beyond the Loire.

At Tours, Nial resolved to afford some repose to his army, in order that they might alleviate the fatigues of their voyage, and gain new spirit for the approaching campaign.

But the glorious reign of Nial, was now drawing to a close, and that brilliant career of conquest and triumph, whose splendors must ever illuminate the history of Ireland, was arrested by the vile hand of an assassin. Gabhran, the prince of the *Dal Riada*, gave, unknown to Nial, a subordinate command in his army to Eochaidh, the deposed king of Leinster. This prince, cherishing the most rancorous revenge in his heart, formed the determination of making the monarch, the appeasing victim of his resentment. An opportunity soon offered, for carrying the infamous designs of his treason and treachery into execution. He observed, that the monarch was in the habit of amusing himself, by fishing in the Loire. One day, while Nial was engaged in this pastime, without the attendance of any of his suit, Eochaidh concealed himself behind a tree, where, aiming an arrow at him, it pierced his heart, and deprived him in-

* As the O'Nials were the most illustrious of the Milesian Princes, and the last Irish chieftains that yielded to the dominion of England, we subjoin, from the notes appended to a beautiful poem, entitled the "*Grave of O'Niel*," written by *Hugh Clarke, Esq.*, of Dublin, in 1825, a genealogical account of the family, from the last legitimate remnant of that regal stock, the late Edmund of O'Niel, of Green Castle, County of Donegal, and Charles O'Niel, of Banville, County of Down. The family of Earl O'Niel, were the offspring of illicit love.

"Edmund O'Niel, the son of Bryan O'Niel, son of Edmund, son of Edmund Gar, (the good and heroic,) son of Phelim Ceact, (the powerful,) prince of Tyrone, son of Con Bocach, (who died A. D. 1559,) son of Con, king of Ulster, who, in 1489, founded the Franciscan monastery of Ballynassagert, in Tyrone, murdered by the English in 1493: he was the son of Henry, king of Ulster, died in 1489, son of Owen, who, in 1432, was inaugurated as king of Ulster, "*Lede na Righ*," (the stone of kings,) died in 1456, son of Nial Óge, king of Ulster, died in 1402, son of Nial More, (the great,) king of Ulster, died in 1397, son of Hugh, king of Ulster, died in 1364, who was the son of Donald O'Niel, king of Ulster, died in 1325, son of Bryan Cathaan Dun, king of Ulster, who fell at the battle of Down, 1260. He was the son of Nial Roe, prince of Tyrone, son of Hugh, the son of Murtagh, the son of Tiege Glinn, the son of Connor *na Feodhga*, the son of Flaithbhiastach, the son of Donnel, the son of Hugh Athlamh, the son of Flathberlach, the son of Murtagh, the son of Donal, of Armagh, 158th monarch of Ireland, died in 864, the son of Murtagh, the son of Nial Glandabh, (the black knee,) monarch, died in 951, son of Hugh, the monarch, died 825, son of Nial, died 791, son of Fengoile, the son of Maolduine, son of Nialfilugh, son of Hugh, son of Donal, son of Murtagh, son of Muriardoch, son of Owen, son of Nial, the great monarch of the nine hostages, who was the eighth descendant from the magnanimous hero, Con, of the hundred battles, the direct successor of Heremon."

stantly of life. Thus fell Nial the Grand, in the twenty-seventh year of a more triumphant and splendid reign, than any recorded in our history. His soul was the seat of courage, patriotism, and magnanimity; and if he was often swayed by ambition, it was that ambition, that predominated over the mind of the hero, and led him on to deeds of glorious valour, and to feats of gigantic chivalry, performed to aggrandize his country, and elevate her military fame to the highest eminence of renown.*

The assassin, after perpetrating the barbarous deed, fled to the coast, from the fury of Nial's soldiers, and embarked for Scotland.

Prince Dathy, the nephew of the late monarch, was promoted, by the Irish army, to the chief command.

This chieftain, aspiring to the throne, came to the determination of relinquishing the conquests of his uncle in France, and of returning to Ireland, with a gallant army, entirely devoted to his interest. Molloy informs us, that Dathy caused his uncle's body to be embalmed, and brought home to Ireland, where, having been honored with the highest funeral ceremony, it was interred in the royal mausoleum of Cruachan.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Credibility of the History of Pagan Ireland.

IN support of the authenticity and credit that are due to the relations of our early annalists, and to demonstrate the antiquity of our literary, social, and legal institution, we extract from MOORE's History of Ireland, the following excellent disquisition.

"Before entering upon the new epoch of Irish history, which is about to open upon us with the introduction of Christianity, a review of the general features, of the period over which we have passed, may be found not uninteresting or useless. With regard to the first and most material question, the authenticity of those records, on which the foregoing brief sketch of Pagan Ireland is founded, it is essential, in the first place, to distinguish clearly, between what are called the Bardic Historians,—certain metrical writers, who flourished from the ninth to the eleventh century,—and those regular chroniclers or annalists, of whom a long series was continued down, there is every reason to believe, from very early ages, and whose successive records have been embodied and transmitted to us in the

* "He had pushed the glory of his subjects higher, and extended it further abroad, than any king of Ireland had done before him. The posterity of this king appropriated the monarchy in a manner so much to themselves, that almost all the following monarchs of Ireland, were descended from him."—WARNER.

Annals of Tigernach,* in those of the Four Masters,† of Inisfallen, of Ulster,‡ and many others.§

To the metrical historians above mentioned is to be attributed the credit, if not of originally inventing, at least of amplifying and embellishing, that tale of the Milesian colonization, which so many grave and respectable writers have, since their time, adopted. In his zeal for the credit of this national legend, the late learned librarian of Stowe, has endeavored to enlist some of the more early Irish poets in its support.|| On his own showing, however, it is manifest that in no Irish writings before those of Maolmura,¶ who died towards the close of the ninth century, are any traces whatever of the Milesian fable to be found.

There appears little doubt, indeed, that to some metrical writers of the ninth century, the first rudiments of this wild romance, respecting the origin of the Irish people are to be assigned; that succeeding writers took care to amplify and embellish the original sketch; and that in the hands of the author or authors of the Psalter of Cashel,** it assumed that full blown form of fiction and extrava-

* In the Annals of the Four Masters for the year 1088, the death of this annalist is thus recorded:—"Tigernach O'Braoin, Comorban, or successor of Kieran of Clonmacnois, and of St. Coman, (*i. e.* Abbott of Clonmacnois and Roscommon,) a learned lecturer and historian."

† Compiled in the seventeenth century, by Michael O'Clery, with the assistance of three other antiquaries, and "chiefly drawn," says Harris, "from the annals of Clonmacnois, Inisfall, and Senat, as well as from other approved and ancient chronicles of Ireland." For a fuller account of the various sources from whence these records were derived, see Mr. Petrie's Remarks on the History and Authenticity of the Autograph Original, of the Annals of the Four Masters, now deposited in the library of the R. I. A. Academy.

‡ Published, for the first time, by Dr. O'Connor, from a Bodleian manuscript, of the year 1215.

§ A long list of these various books of Annals, may be found in Nicholson's Historical Library, chap. 2.; also in the preface of Keating's History, xxi.

|| For the very slight grounds, or, rather, mere pretence of grounds, upon which Dr. O'Connor lays claim to Fiech and Confealad, Irish poets of the sixth and seventh centuries, as authorities for the Milesian story, see, among other passages, Ep. Nunc. xxxiv., Prol. 2. xv. xxvi. Having once claimed them, thus gratuitously, as favoring his views of the subject, he continues, constantly after, to refer to them, as concurrent authorities, with those later bardic historians, in whom alone the true origin and substance of the whole story, is to be found.

The Psalter-na-Rann, attributed to the Culdee, Ængus, which is another of the writings appealed to by Dr. O'Connor, on this point, was, however, not the work of that pious author, (who wrote solely on religious subjects,) nor of a date earlier, as is evident, than the tenth century. See Lanigan, Ecclesiast. Hist., chap. xx. note 107.

¶ This writer, who died in the year 884, was the author of a poem beginning, "Let us sing the origin of the Gadelians:" in which, deriving the origin of the Milesians from Japhet, son of Noah, he gives an account of the peregrinations of the ancestors of the Irish, from the dispersion at Babel, to the arrival in Ireland. Contemporary with Maolmura, was Flann Mac Lonan, of whose compositions there remain, says Mr. O'Reilly, three poems, which "are to be found in the account of the spreading branches of Heber, son of Milesius, in the Leabhar Muimhneach, or Munster Book."

** From this work, which was compiled, about the beginning of the tenth century, by Cormac Mac Culinan, bishop of Cashel and king of Munster, Keating professes to have drawn a great part of his History of Ireland. "Since most," says Keating, "of the authentic records of Ireland, are composed in *dann*, or verse, I shall receive them as the principal testimonies to follow in compiling the following history; for, notwithstanding that some of the chronicles of Ireland,

gance, in which it has ever since flourished. It is worthy of remark, too, that the same British writer, Nennius, who furnished Geoffry of Monmouth, with his now exploded fables of the descent of the Britons, from king Brute and the Trojans, was the first, also, who put forth the tale of the Scythian ancestors of the Irish, and of their coming, in the fourth age of the world, by the way of Africa and Spain, into Hibernia. Having conversed, as he himself tells us, with the most learned among the Scots,* and been by them, it is evident, informed of their early traditions, respecting a colony from Spain, he was tempted to eke out their genealogy for them, by extending it as far as Scythia, and the Red Sea, just as he had provided the Britons with Trojan progenitors, under the command of king Brute, from Greece.

To our metrical historians, may be assigned also the credit of inventing that specious system of chronology, upon which the fabric of their fabled antiquity entirely rest, and which, though well calculated to effect the object of its inventors,—that of carrying back to remote times, the date of the Milesian dynasty,—proves them not to have been over-scrupulous in the means they used for that purpose.† It is, indeed, as I have already, more than once, remarked, far less in the events themselves, than in the remote date assigned to those events, that much of the delusion attributed in general to Irish history lies. The ambition of a name ancient as the world, and the lax, accommodating chronology, which is found ever ready, in the infancy of science, to support such pretensions, has led the Irish, as it has led most other nations, to antedate their own existence and fame.‡

differ from these poetical records in some cases, yet the testimony of the annals that were written in verse, is not for that reason invalid.”—*Preface*. About the middle of the tenth century, flourished Eochaidh O’Floian, whose poems, relating to the marvels of the first Irish colonies, the battles between the Nemethians and the sea rovers, the destruction of Conan’s Tower, are still preserved in the books of Glendalough, Ballymote, and Leacan, the Dinn Seanchas, Book of Invasions, &c.

* “*Sic mihi peritissimi Scottorum nuntiaverunt.*” Nennius wrote about the year 858.

† The extravagant chronology of the metrical catalogues of kings, given by Gilla-Coeman, and other later bards, is fully acknowledged by Dr. O’Connor himself:—“*Hæc plane indicant nostras, de Scotorum origine, et primo in Hiberniam ac inde in Britanniam adventu, traditiones metricas historica esse fide suffultas; sed dum bardi prodigiosam antiquitatem, majoribus adscribere conarentur id tantum fingendi licentia efficere ut quas illustrare debuerant veritates offuscarent, et dum Hiberniam, fabulis nobilitare cupiunt ipsi sibi fidem ita derogant ut postea, cum ad tempora historica descendunt, etsi vera dixerint, nimia severitate redarguantur.*”—*Prolog.* 2. xlv.

It was by Coeman, notwithstanding, that the author of Ogygia, chiefly regulated his chronology; and the erudite efforts which he makes to reconcile his system to common sense show how laboriously, sometimes, the learned can go astray. “It is no wonder,” says Mr. O’Connor of Balenagare, “that Gilla-Coeman, and many other of our old antiquaries, have fallen into mistakes and anachronisms: to their earliest reports Mr. O’Flaherty gave too much credit, and to their later accounts, Sir James Ware, gave too little.”—*Reflections on the History of Ireland, Collectan.* No. 10.

‡ “The Danes,” saith Dudo S. Quintin, “derived themselves from the Danaï; the Prussians from Prusias, king of Bithynia, who brought the Greeks along with them. Only the Scots and Irish had the wit to derive themselves from the Greeks and Egyptians together.”—*Antiq. of British Churches*.

Together with the primitive mode of numbering ages and ascertaining the dates of public events, by the successions of kings and the generations of men, the ancient Irish possessed also a measure of time in their two great annual festivals of Baal and of Samhin, the recurrence of which at certain fixed periods furnished points, in each year, from whence to calculate. How far even History may advance to perfection where no more regular chronology exists, appears in the instance of Thucydides, who was able to enrich the world with his "treasure for all time" before any era from whence to date had yet been established in Greece. It was, however, in this very mode of computing by regal successions that the great source of the false chronology of the Irish antiquaries lay. From the earliest times, the government of that country consisted of a cluster of kingdoms, where, besides the Monarch of the whole island and the four provincial Kings, there was also a number of inferior sovereigns, or Dynasts, who each affected the regal name and power. Such a state of things it was that both tempted and enabled the genealogists to construct that fabric of fictitious antiquity by which they imposed not only on others, but on themselves. Having such an abundance of royal blood thus placed at their disposal, the means afforded to them of filling up the genealogical lines, and thereby extending back the antiquity of the monarchy, were far too tempting to be easily resisted. Accordingly,—as some of those most sanguine in the cause of our antiquities have admitted,—not only were kings who had been contemporaries made to succeed each other, but even princes, acknowledged only by their respective factions, were promoted to the rank of legitimate monarchs, and took their places in the same regular succession.* By no other expedient, indeed, could so marvellous a list of Royalty have been fabricated, as that which bestows upon Ireland, before the time of St. Patrick, no less than a hundred and thirty-six monarchs of Milesian blood; thereby extending the date of the Milesian or Scotie settlement to so remote a period as more than a thousand years before the birth of Christ.

Between the metrical historians, or rather romancers, of the middle ages, and those regular annalists who, at the same and a later period, but added their own stock of contemporary records to that consecutive series of annals which had been delivered down, in all probability, for many ages,—between these two sources of evidence, a wide distinction, as I have already inculcated, is to be drawn.†

* A nearly similar mode of lengthening out their regal lists was practised among the Egyptians. "Their kings," says Bryant, "had many names and titles; these titles have been branched out into persons, and inserted in the lists of real monarchs; . . . by which means the chronology of Egypt has been greatly embarrassed."

† Till of late years they have been, by most writers, both English and Irish, confounded. Thus the sensible author of "An Analysis of the Antiquities of Ireland," who, though taking a just and candid view of his subject, had no means of access to the documents which alone could strengthen and illustrate it, has, in the following passage, mixed up together, as of equal importance, our most fabulous compilations and most authentic annals:—"Let us have faithful copies, with just versions, of the hidden records of Keating, of the Psalter of Cashel, of the Book of Lecan, of the Annals of Inisfallen, of those of the Four Masters, and of every other work which may be judged to be of importance. The requisition is

It is true that, in some of the collections of Annals that have come down to us, the fabulous wonders of the first four ages of the world, from Cæsara down to the landing of the sons of Milesius, have been, in all their absurdity, preserved,—as they are, indeed, in most histories of the country down to the present day. It is likewise true, that by most of the annalists the same deceptive scheme of chronology has been adopted, by which the lists of the kings preceding the Christian era are lengthened out so preposterously into past time. But, admitting to the full all such deductions from the authority of these records, more especially as regards their chronology for the times preceding our era, still their pretensions, on the whole, to rank as fair historical evidence, can hardly, on any just grounds, be questioned.

From the objections that have just been alleged against most of the other Books of Annals, that of Tigernach is almost wholly free; as, so far from placing in the van of history the popular-fictions of his day, this chronicler has passed them over significantly in silence; and beginning his Annals with a comparatively late monarch, Kimboath, pronounces the records of the Scots, previously to that period, to have been all uncertain.* The feeling of confidence which so honest a commencement inspires, is fully justified by the tone of veracity which pervades the whole of his statements; and, according as he approaches the Christian era, and, still more, as he advances into that period, the remarkable consistency of his chronology, his knowledge and accuracy in synchronizing Irish events with those of the Roman History, and the uniformly dry matter of fact which forms the staple of his details, all bespeak for these records a confidence of no ordinary kind; and render them, corroborated as they are by other Annals of the same grave description, a body of evidence, even as to the earlier parts of Irish history, far more trustworthy and chronological than can be adduced for some of the most accredited transactions of that early period of Grecian story, when, as we know, the accounts of great events were kept by memory alone.†

simple as it is reasonable. They have long amused us with declamations on the inestimable value of these literary treasures; and surely, after having excited our curiosity, their conduct will be inexcusable, if they do not in the end provide for its gratification."

* Doctor O'Connor, it is right to mention, is of opinion that Tigernach had, like all the other annalists, begun his records from the creation of the world, and that the commencement of his manuscript has been lost. But, besides that the view taken by the annalist as to the uncertainty of all earlier monuments, sufficiently accounts for his not ascending any higher, all the different manuscripts, it appears, of his Annals agree in not carrying the records farther back than A. C. 305.

† "It is strongly implied by his (Pausanias's) expressions, that the written register of the Olympian victors was not so old as Choræbus, but that the account of the first Olympiads had been kept by memory alone. Indeed, it appears certain from all memorials of the best authority, that writing was not common in Greece so early."—*Mitford*, vol. i. chap. 3.

"When we consider that this was the first attempt (the Olympionics of Timæus of Sicily) that we know of, to establish an era, and that it was in the 129th Olympiad, what are we to think of the preceding Greek chronology?"—*Wood's Enquiry into the Life, &c., of Homer*.

A learned writer, who, by the force of evidence, has been constrained to admit the antiquity of the lists of Irish kings, has yet the inconsistency to deny to this people the use of letters before the coming of St. Patrick. It is to be recollected that the regal lists which he thus supposes to have been but orally transmitted, and which, from the commencement of the Christian era, are shown to have been correctly kept, consist of a long succession of princes, in genealogical order, with, moreover, the descent even of the collateral branches in all their different ramifications.* Such is the nature of the royal lists which, according to this sapient supposition, must have been transmitted correctly, from memory to memory, through a lapse of many centuries; and such the weakness of that sort of scepticism,—not unmixed sometimes with a lurking spirit of unfairness,—which, while straining at imaginary difficulties on one side of a question, is prepared to swallow the most indigestible absurdities on the other. And here a consideration on the general subject of Irish antiquities presents itself, which, as it has had great weight in determining my own views of the matter, may, perhaps, not be without some influence on the mind of my reader. In the course of this chapter shall be laid before him a view of the state in which Ireland was found in the fifth century,—of the condition of her people, their forms of polity, institutions, and usages at that period when the Christian faith first visited her shores; and when, by the light which then broke in upon her long seclusion, she became, for the first time, in any degree known to the other nations of Europe. In that very state, political and social, in which her people were then found, with the very same laws, forms of government, manners and habits, did they remain, without change or innovation, for the space of seven hundred years; and though, at the end of that long period, brought abjectly under a foreign yoke, yet continued unsubdued in their attachment to the old law of their country, nor would allow it to be superseded by the code of the conqueror for nearly five hundred years after.

It is evident that to infuse into any order of things so pervading a

* "In Ireland, the genealogies which are preserved, could not have been handed down in such an extensive, and at the same time so correct a manner, without this acquaintance with letters, as the tables embrace too great a compass to retain them in the memory; and as, without the assistance of these elements of knowledge, there would have been no sufficient inducement to bestow on them such peculiar attention."—*Webb, Analysis of the Antiq. of Ireland*. Another well informed writer thus enforces the same view:—"The Irish genealogical tables, which are still extant, carry intrinsic proofs of their being genuine and authentic, by their chronological accuracy and consistency with each other through all the lines collateral, as well as direct; a consistency not to be accounted for on the supposition of their being fabricated in a subsequent age of darkness and ignorance, but easily explained if we admit them to have been drawn from the real source of family records and truth."—*Enquiry concerning the original of the Scots in Britain, by Barnard, Bishop of Killaloe*.

"Foreigners may imagine that it is granting too much to the Irish to allow them lists of kings more ancient than those of any other country in modern Europe; but the singularly compact and remote situation of that island, and its freedom from Roman conquest, and from the concussions of the fall of the Roman empire, may infer this allowance not too much. But all contended for is the list of kings so easily preserved by the repetition of bards at high solemnities, and some grand events of history."—*Pinkerton, Enquiry into the Hist. of Scotland*, part iv. chap. i.

principle of stability, must have been the slow work of time alone; nor could any system of laws and usages have taken so strong a hold of the hearts of a whole people as those of the Irish had evidently obtained at the time of the coming of St. Patrick, without the lapse of many a foregone century to enable them to strike so deeply their roots. In no country, as we shall see, was Christianity received with so fervid a welcome; but in none also had she to make such concessions to old established superstitions, or to leave so much of those religious forms and prejudices, which she found already subsisting, unaltered. Nor was it only over the original Irish themselves that these prescriptive laws had thus by long tenure gained an ascendancy; as even those foreign tribes,—for the most part, as we have seen, Teutonic,—who obtained a settlement among them, had been forced, though conquerors, to follow in the current of long-established customs;* till, as was said of the conquering colonists of an after day, they grew, at length, to be more Hibernian than the Hibernians themselves. The same ancient forms of religion and of government were still preserved; the language of the multitude soon swept away that of the mere caste who ruled them, and their entire exemption from Roman dominion left them safe from even a chance of change.†

How far the stern grasp of Roman authority might have succeeded in effacing from the minds of the Irish their old habits and predilections, it is needless now to inquire. But had we no other proof of the venerable antiquity of their nation, this fond fidelity to the past, this retrospective spirit, which is sure to be nourished in the minds of a people by long-hallowed institutions, would, in the absence of all other means of proof, be fully sufficient for the purpose. When, in addition to this evidence impressed upon the very character of her people, we find Ireland furnished also with all that marks an ancient nation,—unnumbered monuments of other days and belonging to unknown creeds,—a language the oldest of all European tongues still spoken by her people, and Annals written in that language of earlier date than those of any other northern nation of Europe,‡ tracing the line of her ancient kings, in chronological order, up as far at least as the commencement of the Christian era,—when we find such a combination of circumstances, all bearing in the same

* The consequences of this “Oriental inflexibility,”—as Niebhur expresses it, in speaking of the Syrians,—are thus described by Camden:—“The Irish are so wedded to their own customs, that they not only retain them themselves, but corrupt the English that come among them.”

† It has been falsely asserted by some writers, that the Romans visited, and even conquered, Ireland. The old chronicler Wyntown, carries them to that country even so early as the first century; and Gueudeville, the wretched compiler of the *Atlas Historique*, has, in his map of Ireland, represented the country as reduced within the circle of the Roman sway. The pretended monk Richard, also, who, thanks to the credulity of historians, was permitted to establish a new Roman province, *Vespasiana*, to the north of Antonine’s Wall, has, in like manner, made a present to Constantine the Great of the tributary submission of Ireland. “A. M. 4307, Constantinus, qui Magnus postea dicitur . . . cui se sponte tributariam offert Hibernia.”

‡ “*Cæterarum enim gentium Septentrionalium antiquitates scriptas longe recentiores esse existimo, si cum Hibernicis comparentur.*”—*Dr. O’Connor, Ep. Nunc. xix.*

direction, all confirming the impression derived from the historical character of the people,—it is surely an abuse of the right of doubting, to reject lightly such an amount of evidence, or resist the obvious conclusion to which it all naturally leads.

Among the most solemn of the customs observed in Ireland, during the times of paganism, was that of keeping, in each of the provinces, as well as at the seat of the monarchical government, a public Psalter, or register, in which all passing transactions of any interest were noted down. This, like all their other ancient observances, continued to be retained after the introduction of Christianity; and to the great monasteries, all over the country, fell the task of watching over and continuing these records.* That, in their zeal for religion, they should have destroyed most of those documents which referred to the dark rites and superstitions of heathenism, appears highly credible.† But such records as related chiefly to past political events were not obnoxious to the same hostile feeling; and these the monks not only, in most instances, preserved, but carried on a continuation of them, from age to age, in much the same tone of veracious dryness as characterizes that similar series of records, the Saxon Chronicle. In like manner, too, as the English annalists are known, in most instances, to have founded their narrations upon the Anglo-Saxon documents derived from their ancestors, so each succeeding Irish chronicler transmitted the records which he found existing, along with his own; thus giving to the whole series, as has been well said of the Saxon Chronicle, the force of contemporary evidence.‡

The precision with which the Irish annalists have recorded, to the month, day, and hour, an eclipse of the sun, which took place in the year 664, affords both an instance of the exceeding accuracy with which they observed and noticed passing events, and also an undeniable proof that the annals for that year, though long since lost, must have been in the hands of those who have transmitted to us that remarkable record. In calculating the period of the same eclipse, the Venerable Bede§—led astray, it is plain, by his ignorance of that yet undetected error of the Dionysian cycle, by which the equation of the motions of the sun and moon was affected,—exceeded the true time of the event by several days. Whereas the Irish chronicler, wholly ignorant of the rules of astronomy, and merely recording what he had seen passing before his eyes,—namely, that the eclipse

* “Alibi indicavi celebriora Hiberniæ monasteria amanuensem aluisse, *Scribhinn* appellatum.”—*Rev. Hib. Script. Ep. Nunc.*

† “Of the works of the Druids, as we are informed from the Lecan Records, by the learned Donald Mac Firbiss, no fewer than 180 tracts were committed to the flames at the instance of St. Patrick. Such an example set the converted Christians to work in all parts, till, in the end, all the remains of the Druidic superstition were utterly destroyed.”—*Dissert. on the Hist. of Ireland.*

‡ “The annals of these writers are, perhaps, but Latin translations of Anglo-Saxon Chronicles . . . at least, the existence of similar passages, yet in Anglo-Saxon, is one of the best proofs we can obtain of this curious fact, that the Latin narrations of all our chroniclers, of the events preceding the Conquest, are in general translations or abridgments from the Anglo-Saxon documents of our ancestors. This fact is curious, because, wherever it obtains, it gives to the whole series of our annals the force of contemporary evidence.”—*Turner, Hist. of Anglo-Saxons*, book vi. chap. 7.

§ Hist. Ecclesiast. lib. iii. can. 27.

occurred, about the tenth hour, on the 3d of May, in the year 664,—has transmitted a date to posterity, of which succeeding astronomers have acknowledged the accuracy.

It may be said, that this observation was supplied and interpolated by some later hand; but this would only rescue us from one difficulty to involve us as deeply in another; as it must, in that case, be admitted that among the Irish of the middle ages were to be found astronomers sufficiently learned to be able to anticipate that advanced state of knowledge which led to the correction of the Dionysian period, and to ascertain, to the precise hour, a long-past eclipse, which the learned Bede, as we have seen, was unable to calculate to the day. But how far, at a distance nearly two centuries from the time of this eclipse, were even the best Irish scholars from being capable of any such calculations may be judged from a letter, still extant, on this very subject of eclipses, which was addressed to Charlemagne by an Irish doctor of the ninth century, named Dungal.* The letter is in reply to a question proposed by the emperor to the most eminent scholars of that day in Europe, respecting the appearance, as had been alleged, of two solar eclipses, in the course of the year 810; and the Irish doctor, though so far right as to express his doubts that these two eclipses had been visible, is unable, it is plain, to assign any scientific reason for his opinion. Down to a much later period, indeed, so little had the Irish scholars advanced in this science, that, as it appears from the second part of the *Annals of Inisfallen*, they had one year† experienced much difficulty and controversy before they could succeed even in fixing Easter Day.

It may be, therefore, taken for granted, that it was not from any scientific calculation of after times, but from actual and personal observation at the moment that this accurate date of the eclipse in 664 was derived.‡ With equal clearness does it follow that some written record of the observation must have reached those annalists, who, themselves ignorant of the mode of calculating such an event, have transmitted it accurately to our days as they received it. There are still earlier eclipses,—one as far back as A. D. 496,—the years of whose appearance we find noted down by the chroniclers with equal correctness: and so great was the regularity with which, through every succeeding age, all such changes in the ordinary aspect of the heavens was observed and registered, that, by means of these records, the chronologist is enabled to trace the succession, not only of the monarchs of Ireland, but of the inferior kings, bishops, and abbots, from the first introduction of Christianity, down to the occupation of the country by the English.

* Epist. Dungalii Reclusi ad Carol. Magnum de duplici Solis Eclipsi, Ann. 810. This letter may be found in D'Achery's *Spicilegium*, tom. iii., together with some critical remarks upon it by Ismael Bullialdus, the learned champion of the Philolaic system, whom D'Achery had consulted on the subject.

† *Rer. Hibern. Script. Prolog.* 2. cxxxvi. Dr. O'Connor refers, for the above record, to the year 1444; but this is evidently a typographical error, such as abound, I regret to say, throughout this splendid work,—the continuation of the *Annals of Inisfallen* having come down no further than the year 1320.

‡ *Annals of Tigernach*. For the substance of the argument, founded upon this record, I am indebted to Dr. O'Connor, *Prolog.* 2. cxxxiv.

Having, therefore, in the accurate date of the eclipse of 664, and in its correct transmission to succeeding times, so strong an evidence of the existence of a written record at that period; and knowing, moreover, that of similar phenomena in the two preceding centuries, the memory has also been transmitted down to after ages, it is not surely assuming too much to take for granted that the transmission was effected in a similar manner; and that the medium of written record, through which succeeding annalists were made acquainted with the day and hour of the solar eclipse of 664,* conveyed to them also the following simple memorandum, which occurs in their chronicles for the year 496.—“Death of Mac-Cuilin, bishop of Lusk.—An eclipse of the sun—The pope Gelasius died.”

It thus appears pretty certain, that, as far back as the century in which Christianity became the established faith of Ireland, the practice of chronicling public events may be traced; and I have already shown, that the same consecutive chain of records carries the links back, with every appearance of historical truth, to at least the commencement of the Christian era, if not to a century or two beyond that period. To attempt to fix, indeed, the precise time when the confines of history began to be confused with those of fable, is a task in Irish antiquities, as in all others, of mere speculation and conjecture.† It has been seen that Tigernach, by far the best informed and most judicious of our annalists, places the dawn of certainty in Irish history at so early a period as the reign of Kimbaoth, about 300 years before the birth of Christ: and it is certain that the building of the celebrated Palace of Emania, during that monarch’s reign, by establishing an era, or fixed point of time, from whence chronology might begin to calculate, gives to the dates and accounts of the succeeding reigns an appearance of accuracy not a little imposing. This apparent exactness, however, in the successions previous to the Christian era, will not stand the test of near inquiry. For the pur-

* The dates assigned to the several eclipses are, in this and other instances, confirmed by their accordance with the catalogues of eclipses composed by modern astronomers, with those in the learned work of the Benedictines, and other such competent authorities. There is even an eclipse, it appears, noticed in the Annals of Ulster, ad. ann. 674, which has been omitted in *L’Art de vérifier les Dates*.—Ep. Nunc. xciv.

† According to Mr. O’Connor of Balenacgare, in his later and more moderate stage of antiquarianism, “it is from the succession of Feredach the Just, and the great revolution soon after, under Tuathal the Acceptable, that we can date exactness in our Heathen History.”—*Reflections on the Hist. of Ireland*. The period here assigned commences about A. D. 85. A Right Reverend writer, however, in the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, carries his faith in Irish chronology much further. “A general agreement,” says Bishop Barnard, “appears in the names and lineage of that long series of princes that succeeded and descended from the first conqueror down to the fifth century; and the descent of the collateral branches is traced up to the royal stem with such precision and consistency, as shows it to have been once a matter of public concern. The later bards and seanchies could not have fabricated tables that should have stood the test of critical examination as these will do; from whence I infer, that they have been a true transcript from ancient records then extant, but since destroyed. I am ready to admit, however, that the transactions of those times are mixed with the fictions of later ages . . . it is, therefore, neither to be received nor rejected in the gross, but to be read with a sceptical caution.”—*Enquiry concerning the Original, &c., by Barnard, Bishop of Killaloe*.

pose of making out a long line of kings before that period, a deceptive scheme of chronology has been adopted; and all the efforts made by O'Flaherty and others to connect the traditions of those times into a series of regular history, but serve to prove how hopeless, or, at least, wholly uncertain, is the task.

As we descend towards the first age of Christianity, events stand out from the ground of tradition more prominently, and begin to take upon them more of the substance of historical truth. The restoration, under Eochy Feyloch, of the ancient Pentarchy, which had been abolished by the monarch Hugony,—the important advance made in civilization during the reign of Conquovar Mac Ness, by committing the laws of the country to writing,—these and other signal events, almost coeval with the commencement of Christianity, border so closely upon that period to which, it has been shown, written records most probably extended, as to be themselves all but historical.

In corroboration of the view here taken of the authenticity of the Irish Annals, and of the degree of value and confidence which is due to them, I need but refer to an authority which, on such subjects, ranks among the highest. "The chronicles of Ireland," says Sir James Mackintosh, "written in the Irish language, from the second century to the landing of Henry Plantagenet, have been recently published, with the fullest evidence of their genuineness and exactness. The Irish nation, though they are robbed of many of their legends by this authentic publication, are yet by it enabled to boast that they possess genuine history several centuries more ancient than any other European nation possesses, in its present spoken language;—they have exchanged their legendary antiquity for historical fame. Indeed, no other nation possesses any monument of its literature, in its present spoken language, which goes back within several centuries of the beginning of these chronicles."*

With the exception of the mistake into which Sir James Mackintosh has here, rather unaccountably, been led, in supposing that, among the written Irish chronicles which have come down to us, there are any so early as the second century, the tribute paid by him to the authenticity and historical importance of these documents†

* Hist. of Eng., vol. i. chap. 2. A writer in the Edin. Rev. No. xcii., (Sir James Mackintosh,) in speaking of Dr. O'Connor's work, thus, in a similar manner, expresses himself:—"We have here the works of the ancient Irish historians, divested of modern fable and romance; and whatever opinion may be formed of the early traditions they record, satisfactory evidence is afforded that many facts they relate, long anterior to our earliest chroniclers, rest on contemporary authority . . . Some of Dr. O'Connor's readers may hesitate to admit the degree of culture and prosperity he claims for his countrymen; but no one, we think, can deny, after perusing his proofs, that the Irish were a lettered people, while the Saxons were still immersed in darkness and ignorance." I shall add one other tribute to the merit of Dr. O'Connor's work, coming from a source which highly enhances the value of the praise:—"A work," says Sir F. Palgrave, "which, whether we consider the learning of the editor, the value of the materials, or the princely munificence of the Duke of Buckingham, at whose expense it was produced, is without a parallel in modern literature."—*Rise of the English Commonwealth*.

† How little, till lately, these Annals were known, even to some who have written most confidently respecting Ireland, may be seen by reference to a letter addressed by Mr. O'Connor to General Vallancey, acknowledging his perusal then,

appears to me, in the highest degree, deserved ; and comes with the more authority, from a writer whose command over the wide domain of history enabled him fully to appreciate the value of any genuine addition to it.

It has been thus clearly, as I conceive, demonstrated that our Irish Annals are no forgery of modern times ; no invention, as has been so often alleged, by modern monks and versifiers : but, for the most part, a series of old authentic records, of which the transcripts have from age to age been delivered down to our own times. Though confounded ordinarily with the fabulous tales of the Irish Bards, these narrations bear on the face of them a character the very reverse of poetical, and such as, in itself alone, is a sufficient guarantee of their truth. It has been shown, moreover, that the lists preserved of the ancient Irish kings (more ancient than those of any other country in modern Europe) are regulated by a system of chronology which, however in many respects imperfect, computes its dates in the ancient mode, by generations and successions ; and was founded upon the same measures of time—the lunar year, and the regular recurrence of certain periodical festivals—by which the Greeks, the Romans, and other great nations of antiquity, all computed the earlier stages of their respective careers.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Accession of Dathy to the throne.—The mission of St. Palladius to Ireland.—He builds two churches in Drogheda, and one in Slane, in the County of Meath.—Dathy conquers a great part of England.—He invades France, and carries the terror of his arms to the foot of the Alps, where he is killed by lightning, A. D. 427.

DATHY, being zealously supported by the army, was raised to the throne without opposition. He summoned, immediately after his accession, the national representatives to Tara, and announced to them his resolution of following up the plans of conquest which had been formed by his uncle Nial, against Britain and France. At this juncture, the internal anarchy and dissension that prevailed in Rome compelled the government to withdraw the greater part of their legions from Britain and Gaul ; so that the Irish monarch reasonably calculated on subjugating with ease the entire of the former, and a great portion of the latter country, to his dominion.

After refitting his fleet and recruiting his army, he sailed for Scotland, from whence he purposed to penetrate into Britain. By

for the first time, of the Annals of Tigernach and of Inisfallen, which his venerable friend had lately lent him.—*Reflect. on Hist. of Ireland, Collect. No. 10.* The ignorance of Mr. Beauford, too, a professed Irish antiquary, respecting the valuable work of Tigernach, is shown by the statement in his *Druidism Revived*, (Collectan. Hib. No. vii.) that the records of this annalist commence only at the fifth century, “without making the least mention of the pagan state of the Irish.”

a preconcerted plan, the forces of the *Dal Riada*, and a large body of the Anglo Saxons joined him, on his landing on the Caledonian shore. At the head of this combined army, he broke down the wall which the Romans had rebuilt during Nial's absence in Gaul,* captured the fortresses of the enemy on the frontiers, and entered Carlisle as a conqueror.

It is admitted that Dathy, in carrying fire and sword into Britain, evinced very little greatness or generosity; for the English annalists say, that he allowed his soldiers to plunder, and commit other violent excesses. The Britons, thus driven to desperation by the licentious enormities of the Irish, sent messengers to Rome to claim assistance and protection. In consequence of this application, a Roman legion landed in Britain, and, joining with the inhabitants, they attacked the Irish, who were dispersed over the country, and before they had time to concentrate, defeated them in several skirmishes. Dathy, by these disasters, which were the result of the excesses in which he had allowed his army to indulge, retreated to Caledonia, where he soon filled up the chasms in his ranks by levies of troops made in his own kingdom, as well as among his tributaries, the *Dal Riada*. While he was thus augmenting his army, Constantine, a general of the Roman legion in Britain, was proclaimed emperor by his soldiers, and, in consequence, that chieftain abandoned Britain, and repaired to the "Eternal city," where, soon after his arrival, he met his fate.

Dathy, on hearing of the departure of the Romans, prepared for another incursion into Britain, the inhabitants of which, far from opposing his progress, fled in confusion and terror before him. "And now it was," says Dr. O'Halloran, "that the poor Britons experienced all the shocking cruelties of lawless victory, which Gildas and Bede so pathetically deplore. So great was the rapacity of the Irish army, and so frequent their depredations, that the country was reduced to the utmost misery; and the want of necessaries, as well as the apprehension of catching the epidemic disorders incident to cold and famine, obliged Dathy to quit the country, but with the firm resolution of returning to it at a more proper season."

Britain no longer affording any fruits for conquest, Dathy prepared another expedition to Gaul, where he expected to profit largely

* "This wall, which was originally built by the Emperor Adrian, A. D. 134, and so often thrown down by the Irish kings, Bede informs us, was sixty miles in length, twelve feet high, and eight in thickness. When Nial set out on his expedition to France, the Romans forced the Britons to repair the wall; but Bede further asserts, in his ecclesiastical history, (page 12, chapter i. vol. i.) that the Britons, not having amongst them any one skilled in stone work, they had to raise up the fortification, in the best manner they could, with earth. But this wall, though strong, was not sufficient to retard the march of the young Irish king, at the head of a gallant army. Dathy led on the *Dalgas* to the assault; the opposition of the Romans, though brave, had to yield; the slingers, or the *Cran Tubal*, assisted by the archers, put the Romans to flight. British writers, and among them the venerable Bede, charge the Irish monarch with committing the most cruel excesses, on his march through Britain. The laws of nations justified Dathy, in some measure, in this conduct; for the Britons were beholden to him and his uncle for freeing them from the Roman yoke, and he knew that they were now a barbarous people, lost to every sense of liberty, and the avowed slaves of Rome."—*A Chart of Irish History*, page 79, vol. ii.

by his victories. He therefore embarked in a Caledonian port, with a formidable army, for France, and after a prosperous voyage of three days, landed on the coast of Normandy, without opposition. At this period, A. D. 426, the Roman power was gradually approaching a declension. The Emperor Theodosius II., to make head against the Persians, who then invaded the Roman territory, was constrained to withdraw all his forces from Gaul; so that the Irish monarch did not meet any resistance in his march over France. "In the two last reigns," writes O'Halloran, "the Irish arms prevailed only on the maritime coasts of Gaul, in Britany and Normandy; but in the present we see them, under a gallant king, unite with their allies, and carry terror and ruin to the very acclivities of the Alps."

Here Dathy concentrated his army, with the view of penetrating into the fertile provinces of Italy, where he promised his soldiers that spoils and trophies should reward their valour and perseverance. But death prevented the prediction from being verified; for, as Dathy and some of his officers were amusing themselves in ascending to an Alpine summit, the king was struck by lightning, which terminated his life and his glory, in the twenty-third year of a reign distinguished for brilliant achievements abroad, and for peace and prosperity at home. A. D. 427.

When the Christians at Rome heard of the death of the Irish monarch, in the manner we have narrated, they declared that the thunderbolt was directed by the hand of Omnipotence, to annihilate a Pagan prince, who meditated the destruction of the Roman empire.*

The cause of the king's death exerted a strong influence on the minds of the Irish army, and they, while yielding to their superstitious fears, called urgently on Prince LAOGHAIRE, the son of Nial the Great, who succeeded to the chief command, to return home to Ireland. This prince, aspiring to the throne of his father, complied with their request, and retraced his steps to the coast of France, bringing with him, in a superb funeral car, the embalmed body of his uncle, King Dathy. When the prince and his army reached the shores of Ireland, he was met, immediately after his landing, by the Druids, representatives of the people, and the provincial chiefs, to salute him monarch, and to join in the funeral procession of the deceased king, to "*Rolig na Riogh*," or the cemetery of kings, in the county of Rosecommon.

The fame of the Irish arms in Gaul extended to Rome, where it created alarm and admiration. Pope Celestine, wishing to rescue a people so valiant as the Irish had proved themselves to be, by their

* "The alliances of the Irish and Anglo Saxons are clearly attested by Bede and Camden. Whitaker and Pinkerton prove sufficiently the conquest of Britain by the Irish and Dalriada, under Nial and Dathy. The Irish assisted the Armoricans to throw off the yoke of the Romans. Zozimus, in his history of the Roman empire, strengthens the credit of the Irish historians by his statements, in part of which he says, "The maritime and other provinces of Gaul, intending to free themselves from the Roman yoke, expelled their governors and garrisons." The time that the Armoricans (i. e. the people of Flanders and Normandy) united in the grand confederacy against Rome, must have happened in the reign of the great Nial of the nine hostages."—O'FLAHERTY.

exploits, sent Saint Palladius as a missionary to Ireland. The holy man landed at Drogheda, with a few disciples, where he built two churches. After having finished these edifices, he proceeded to Slane,* a distance of six miles north of Drogheda, where he began to build another; but before the structure was completed, he was arrested by the Pagan king of Meath, and thrown by order of the Druids, into a dungeon. When the saint was summoned before the prince and a convocation of Druids, he defended his creed and purpose with such moving eloquence, that the Queen of Meath enlisted her sympathies in his behalf, and persuaded the prince, her husband, in contravention of the decision of the Druids, to spare his life, and permit him to depart from the country. "There is no doubt," observes Dr. Warner, "that several of the learned Irish had received the Christian faith, even before the mission of St. Palladius, as there were four bishops in Ireland who preached the gospel, and made many converts to Christ. These are canonized by their biographers under the names of St. Albe, Declan, Iber, and Kieran, the bishop of Duleek, in the county of Meath." That we had a knowledge of the pure and revivifying religion of Christ before the time of St. Palladius had been proved by Bishop Usher; and, if his authority were not sufficient, we might adduce, in corroboration, the evidence of Prosper, who says, "Palladius was sent to the *Irish believing in Christ*."

The Scottish writers, and theirs were surely the "unkindest stab of all," a parricidal attack on the reputation of the venerable mother of Albany, have endeavored to prove, that we were as sunk in heathen barbarism, on the arrival of St. Patrick, as our St. Columba found themselves, in the sixth century, when, to use the emphatic language of the great "colossus of literature," they were "roving bands and fierce barbarians." But this assertion is no longer maintained; as the *Macphersonian* bubble of imposition has been bursted by the Scottish breath of historical candour and impartiality. In the biography of St. Patrick, which will occupy our next chapter, we shall, we hope, demonstrate, that he brought us, from Rome, (for the Caledonians have no more claim to the honor of giving him birth, than they have to the arrogant assumption of Ossian being their countryman,) neither literature nor science.

Dr. Warner, who was a fair and liberal historian, except where religious bigotry perverted his judgment, in relation to the mission of St. Palladius† observes, "he was the first bishop sent from Rome

* The town of *Slane*, beautifully situated on the banks of the river Boyne, at the distance of thirty-eight English miles from Dublin, is rich in antiquities, and famed in Irish history. St. Patrick finished the church which Palladius had begun, and consecrated St. Eric, who died in 514, the first bishop of Slane. From this era, until 1153, there were six bishop's sees in Meath, namely, Duleek, Kells, Trim, Ardbrackan, Dunshaughlin, and Slane. But it is in our topography of Meath we shall give a succinct account of these sees. The Baron of Slane, Christopher Flemming, built a magnificent abbey on the site of St. Eric's Church, A. D. 1512. The present Marquis of Conyngham occupies a magnificent castle here, on the banks of the Boyne, which was visited by George IV., in 1822.

† "After Palladius had left Ireland, he arrived among the *Albanian* Scots. He preached there with great zeal, and formed a considerable church. Palladius was the first bishop in that country, as the Irish royal saint Columba was the first apostle

to Ireland; but the Irish annalists assert, that they had their own bishops and ministers, elected by the suffrages of the people, before his coming." The fact is, that the enlightened mind of king Cormac kindled that spark of Christianity in Ireland, which St. Patrick subsequently fanned into a meridian blaze, that dispelled the darkness of Druidical superstition.

From the reign of Cormac O'Con, down to the epoch of which we are writing, the Druids progressively lost ground in the estimation of the people, who, no longer looking upon them as the delegated ministers of heaven, began now to free their minds from the trammels of superstition, and to regard these religious dictators with feelings of sovereign contempt. On the arrival of St. Patrick, the spell which they had so long exercised over the Irish mind was dissolved, and their ascendancy became so impotent, that they were but the mere relics of their pristine power, and at once incapable of inspiring fear or impressing reverence.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The state of Religion, Literature, and the Arts in Ireland at the accession of Laoghaire, A. D. 428.—A Biographical Sketch of Saint Patrick.

THE introduction of Christianity into Ireland, and the extinction of the sublime, though superstitious system of the Druids, constitute a signal epoch in our history. This memorable reformation in the religion of Ireland, or rather the emission of the Irish mind from the darkness of error to the light of truth, gave birth to impulsive consequences that deeply affected the morals, character, and politics of succeeding ages.

"The period of Irish history," writes MOORE, "on which we are now about to enter, and of which the mission of St. Patrick forms the principal feature, will be found to exhibit, perhaps, as singular and striking a moral spectacle as any the course of human affairs ever yet presented. A community of fierce and proud tribes, for ever warring among themselves, and wholly secluded from all the rest of the world, with an ancient hierarchy entrenched in its own venerable superstitions, and safe from the weakening infusion of the creeds of Greece or Rome, would seem to present as dark and intractable materials for the formation of a Christian people as any

who converted all the Caledonians to the creed of Christ. St. Palladius died A. D. 463, at Fordun, a little town within fifteen miles of Aberdeen."—*Molloy's Irish Miscellanies.*

"His relics were preserved with religious respect, in the monastery of Fordun, as Hector Boetius and Camden testify. In the year 1409, William Scenes, Archbishop of St. Andrew's, and Primate of all Scotland, enclosed them in a new shrine, enriched with gold and precious stones. He was a Roman of noble birth, and a bosom friend of Pope Celestine, who sent him to Ireland. His festival is marked on the sixth of July, in the breviary of Aberdeen."—*Butler's Saints.*

that could be conceived. The result proves, however, the uncertainty of such calculations upon national character, while it affords an example of that ready pliancy, that facility in yielding to new impulses and influences, which, in the Irish character, is found so remarkably combined with a fond adherence to old usages and customs, and with that sort of retrospective imagination which for ever yearns after the past.

"While, in all other countries, the introduction of Christianity has been the slow work of time, has been resisted by either government or people, and seldom affected without a lavish effusion of blood, in Ireland, on the contrary, by the influence of one humble but zealous missionary, and with but little previous preparation of the soil by other hands, Christianity burst forth, at the first ray of apostolic light, and, with the sudden ripeness of a northern summer, at once covered the whole land. Kings and princes, when not themselves among the ranks of the converted, saw their sons and daughters joining in the train without a murmur. Chiefs, at variance in all else, agreed in meeting beneath the Christian banner; and the proud Druid and Bard laid their superstitions meekly at the foot of the cross; nor, by a singular blessing of Providence—unexampled, indeed, in the whole history of the church—was there a single drop of blood shed, on account of religion, through the entire course of this mild Christian revolution, by which, in the space of a few years, all Ireland was brought tranquilly under the dominion of the Gospel.*

"By no methods less gentle and skilful than those which her great Apostle employed, could a triumph so honorable, as well to himself as to his nation of willing converts, have been accomplished. Landing alone, or with but a few humble followers, on their shores, the circumstances attending his first appearance (of which a detailed account shall presently be given) were of a nature strongly to affect the minds of a people of lively and religious imaginations; and the flame, once caught, found fuel in the very superstitions and abuses which it came to consume. Had any attempt been made to assail, or rudely alter, the ancient ceremonies and symbols of their faith, all that prejudice in favour of old institutions, which is so inherent in the nation, would at once have rallied around their primitive creed; and the result would, of course, have been wholly different. But the same policy by which Christianity did not disdain to win her way in more polished countries, was adopted by the first missionaries in Ireland; and the outward forms of past error became the vehicle through which new and vital truths were conveyed.†

* Giraldus Cambrensis has been guilty of either the bigotry or the stupidity of adducing this bloodless triumph of Christianity among the Irish, as a charge against that people;—"Pro Christi ecclesia corona martyri nulla. Non igitur inventus est in partibus istis, qui ecclesiæ surgentis fundamenta sanguinis effusione cementaret: non fuit qui faceret hoc bonum; non fuit useque ad unum."—*Topog. Hib.* dist. iii. cap. 29.

† The very same policy was recommended by Pope Gregory to Augustine and his fellow-labourers in England. See his letter to the Abbot Mellitus, in Bede, (lib. i. c. 30.) where he suggests that the temples of the idols in that nation ought not to be destroyed. "Let the idols that are in them," he says, "be destroyed; let holy water be made, and sprinkled in the said temples; let altars be erected, and relics placed. For if those temples are well built, it is requisite that they be

The days devoted, from old times, to Pagan festivals, were now transferred to the service of the Christian cause. The feast of Samhain, which had been held annually at the time of the vernal equinox, was found opportunely to coincide with the celebration of Easter; and the fires lighted up by the Pagan Irish, to welcome the summer solstice, were continued afterwards, and even down to the present day, in honour of the eve of St. John.

"At every step, indeed, the transition to a new faith was smoothed by such coincidences or adoptions. The convert saw in the baptismal font, where he was immersed, the sacred well at which his fathers had worshipped. The Druidical stone on the "high places" bore, rudely graved upon it, the name of the Redeemer; and it was in general by the side of those ancient pillar towers—whose origin was even then, perhaps, a mystery—that, in order to share in the solemn feelings which they inspired, the Christian temples arose. With the same view, the Sacred Grove was anew consecrated to religion, and the word *Dair*, or oak, so often combined with the names of churches in Ireland, sufficiently marks the favourite haunts of the idolatry which they superseded.* In some instances, the accustomed objects of former worship were associated, even more intimately, with the new faith; and the order of Druidesses, as well as the idolatry which they practised, seemed to be revived, or rather continued, by the Nuns of St. Bridget, in their inextinguishable fire and miraculous oak at Kildare.†

"To what extent Christianity had spread, in Ireland, before the

converted from the worship of devils to the service of the true God; that the nation, not seeing those temples destroyed, may remove error from their hearts, and knowing and adoring the true God, may more willingly resort to the same places they were wont . . . For there is no doubt but that it is impossible to retrench all at once from obdurate minds, because he who endeavours to ascend the highest place, rises by degrees or steps, and not by leaps." See Hume's remarks on this policy of the first missionaries, vol. i. chap. 1.

With similar views, the early Christians selected, in general, for the festivals of their church, such days as had become hallowed to the Pagans by the celebration of some of their religious solemnities.

* Thus Dairmagh, now called Durrough, in the King's county, once the site of a celebrated monastery, signifies the Oak Grove of the Plain, or the Plain of the Oaks. The name of the ancient monastery, Doire-Calgaich, from whence the city of Derry was designated, recalls the memory of the Hill of Oaks, on which it was originally erected; and the chosen seat of St. Bridget, Kildare, was but the Druid's Cell of Oaks converted into a Christian temple.

† See Giraldus, Topog. Hibern. dist. ii. cap. 34, 35, 36. 48. The Tales of Giraldus, on this subject, are thus rendered by a learned but fanciful writer, the author of *Nimrod*:—"St. Bridget is certainly no other than Vesta, or the deity of the fire-worshippers in a female form. The fire of St. Bridget was originally in the keeping of nine virgins; but in the time of Giraldus Cambrensis there were twenty, who used to watch alternate nights; but on the twentieth night, the man whose turn it was merely to throw on the wood, crying, "Bridget, watch thine own fire!"—in the morning the wood was found consumed, but the fire unextinguished. Nor, indeed, (saith Giraldus) hath it ever been extinguished during so many ages since that virgin's time; nor, with such piles of fuel as have been there consumed, did it ever leave ashes. The fire was surrounded by a fence, of form circular, like Vesta's temple—"Virgeo orbiculari sepe,"—which no male creature could enter, and escape divine vengeance. An archer of the household of Count Richard jumped over St. Bridget's fence, and went mad; and he would blow in the face of whoever he met, saying, 'Thus did I blow St. Bridget's fire!' Another man put his leg through a gap in the fence, and was withered up."—Vol. ii.

mission of St. Patrick, there are no very accurate means of judging. The boast of Tertullian, that, in his time, a knowledge of the Christian faith had reached those parts of the British isles yet unapproached by the Romans, is supposed to imply as well Ireland as the northern regions of Britain;* nor are there wanting writers, who, placing reliance on the assertion of Eusebius, that some of the apostles preached the Gospel in the British isles, suppose St. James the elder to have been the promulgator of the faith among the Irish,†—just as St. Paul, on the same hypothesis, is said to have communicated it to the Britons.

“But though unfurnished with any direct evidence as to the religious state of the Irish in their own country, we have a proof how early they began to distinguish themselves, on the continent, as Christian scholars and writers, in the persons of Pelagius, the eminent heresiarch, and his able disciple Celestius. That the latter was a Scot, or native of Ireland, is almost universally admitted; but of Pelagius it is, in general, asserted that he was a Briton, and a monk of Bangor in Wales. There appears little doubt, however, that this statement is erroneous, and that the monastery to which he belonged was that of Bangor, or rather Banchor, near Carrickfergus. Two of the most learned, indeed, of all the writers respecting the heresy which bears his name, admit Pelagius, no less than his disciple, to have been a native of Ireland.‡

“By few of the early Christian heresiarchs was so deep an impression made on their own times, or such abundant fuel for controversy bequeathed to the future, as by this remarkable man, Pelagius, whose opinions had armed against him all the most powerful theologians of his day, and who yet extorted, even from his adversaries, the praise of integrity and talent. The very bitterness with which St. Jerome attacks him, but shows how deeply he felt his power;§ while the eulogies so honourably bestowed upon him by his great opponent, St. Augustine, will always be referred to by the lovers of tolerance, as a rare instance of that spirit of fairness and liberality by which the warfare of religious controversy may be softened.||

* Britannorum inaccessa Romanis loca, Christo vero subdita.—*Lib. adv. Judæos*, cap. 7.

† See the authorities collected on this point by Usher, *Eccles. Primord.* chap. i. xvi. Vincent de Beauvais thus asserts it:—“Nutu Dei Jacobus Hiberniæ oris appulsus verbum Dei prædicavit intrepidus, ubi septem discipulos eligisse fertur.”—*Speculum Historiale*, lib. viii. c. 7. It has been well conjectured by Usher that this story has arisen from a confusion of Hibernia with Hiberia; the latter being one of the names of Spain, which country St. James is said to have visited.

‡ Garnier, in his *Dissert. upon Pelagianism*, and Vossius, in his *Histor. Pelag.* The latter says:—“Pelagius professione monachus, natione non Gallus Brito, ut Danæus putavit; nec Anglo-Britannus, ut scripsit Balæus; sed Scotus.”—*Lib. i.* cap. 3.

§ Among other reflections on the country of Pelagius, St. Jérôme throws in his teeth the Irish flummery:—“Nec recordatur stolidissimus et Scotorum pultibus prægravatus.”—In *Hierem. Præfat.* lib. i. Upon this, Vossius remarks:—“Nam per *Scotorum pultibus prægravatum*, non alium intelligit quam Pelagium natione Scotum.”—*Lib. i.* cap. 3.

|| The following are a few of the passages, in which this praise, so creditable to both parties, is conveyed:—“Pelagii, viri, ut audio, sanctit et non parvo profectu Christiani.”—*De Peccat. meritis ac remiss.* lib. iii. cap. 1.—“Eum qui noverunt

"The rank of Celestius, in public repute, though subordinate, of course, to that of his master, was not, in its way, less distinguished. So high was the popular estimate of his talents, that most of the writings circulated under the name of Pelagius, were supposed to have been in reality the production of his disciple's pen. We are told by St. Augustine, indeed, that many of the followers of the heresy chose to style themselves, of the latter, Celestians; and St. Jerome, in one of his paroxysms of vituperation, goes so far as to call him "the leader of the whole Pelagian army."*

"While yet a youth, and before he had adopted the Pelagian doctrines, Celestius had passed some time in a monastery on the continent, supposed to have been that of St. Martin of Tours, and from thence (A. D. 369) addressed to his parents, in Ireland, three letters, "in the form," as we are told, "of little books," and full of such piety, "as to make them necessary to all who love God." Among his extant works there is mentioned an epistle "On the Knowledge of Divine Law;" which, by some, is conjectured to have been one of those letters addressed by him to his parents.† But Vossius has shown, from internal evidence, that this could not have been the case; the epistle in question being, as he says, manifestly tinged with Pelagianism, and therefore to be referred to a later date. The fact of Celestius thus sending letters to Ireland, with an implied persuasion, of course, that they would be read, affords one of those incidental proofs of the art of writing being then known to the Irish, which, combining with other evidence more direct, can leave but little doubt upon the subject. A country that could produce, indeed, before the middle of the fourth century, two such able and distinguished men as Pelagius and Celestius, could hardly have been a novice, at that time, in civilization, however secluded from the rest of Europe she had hitherto remained.

"From some phrases of St. Jerome, in one of his abusive attacks on Pelagius, importing that the heresy professed by the latter was common to others of his countrymen, it has been fairly concluded that the opinions in question were not confined to these two Irishmen; but, on the contrary, had even spread to some extent among that people. It is, indeed, probable, that whatever Christians Ireland could boast at this period, were mostly followers of the peculiar tenets of their two celebrated countrymen; and the fact that Pelagianism had, at some early period, found its way into this country, is proved by a letter from the Roman clergy to those of Ireland, in the

loquuntur bonum ac prædicandum virum."—*Ib.* cap. 3. And again, "Vir ille tam egregie Christianus."

* "Pelagii licet discipulum tamen magistrum et ductorem exercitus."—*Epist. ad Ctesiphont.*

† "Cælestius antequam dogma Pelagianum incurreret, imo adhuc adolescens scripsit ad parentes suos de monasterio epistolas in modum libellorum tres, omni Deum desideranti necessarias."—*Gennadius, Catal. Illust. Vir.* By Dr. O'Connor, this passage of Gennadius has been rather unaccountably brought forward, in proof of the early introduction of monastic institutions into Ireland. "Monachorum instituta toto fere sæculo ante S. Patricii adventum, invecta fuisse in Hiberniam patet ex supra allatis de Cælestio, qui ab ipsa adolescentia monasterio se dicavit, ut scribit Genadius." But the mere fact of the Irishman Celestius having been in a monastery on the continent, is assuredly no proof of the introduction of monastic establishments into Ireland."—See *Prol. i. lxxviii.*

year 640, wherein, adverting to some indications of a growth of heresy, at that time, they pronounce it to be a revival of the old Pelagian virus.”*

With the progressive establishment of the religion of peace, we behold a nation of warriors who considered heroism the most ennobling virtue, the distinguishing attribute of high Milesian birth, illuminated by the light of divine revelation, and softened and refined by the spirit of Christian mildness and forbearance, become a nation of sanctity, their country the asylum of saintly sages and hermits. In future we shall behold the proud and chivalrous knights of the red-branch throwing aside their coats of mail, and assuming the more impenetrable armour of Christian fortitude. The forthcoming chapters of this history, if God shall spare us life to write them, will present the tumultuous spirit of military ardour, chastened by the pure flame of religion, subside into the meek effusions of universal charity and affable amenity. The religion of our Pagan ancestors seemed to be formed to raise the mind to the loftiest pinnacle of warlike enthusiasm; and, therefore, to be more hostile to that spirit of humility so strongly inculcated by the benign precepts of the gospel. Such of our readers as have attentively read the preceding chapters of this history, must have observed, that pride of ancestry was the ruling and predominating passion of the Milesian race. This pride, which gave a tone to their feelings and a bias to their prejudices, may be justly considered the political hinge on which their entire system of civil polity turned: it influenced the general councils of the state, it roused to arms the slumbering martial chiefs, and their devoted vassals, and insidiously whispered to each, that the monarchy of Ireland was to crown the success of his military achievements; nor could it be wrested from them by the iron grasp of foreign dominion, nor by the withering influence of political slavery. It attended them through every period of their history; it clings still tenaciously to their feelings, and it glows in the bosom of the poorest peasant in our country at the present day, with as much warmth, and with as ardent an enthusiasm as it did before the English treacherously trammelled us in the harness of despotism, and broke the sceptre of our ancient kings. The Irish have ever proved themselves the champions of liberty, and in every foreign battle-field where democratic freedom was the prize of victory, their valour has shone in the full refulgence of heroism; but that they could submit to a republican form of government, in their own country, beside the tombs of their ancestors and the ruined palaces of their princes, even if DANIEL O'CONNELL were its head, is a chimerical supposition that no one acquainted with their history, habits, and notions, can for a moment entertain. There is no people in Europe so proud of exalted ancestry and the chivalrous exploits of their Milesian forefathers as the Irish.

All our historians assert, that at the period of Laoghaire's succession to the throne of Ireland, literature and the arts were carried to the acme of cultivation. The Irish Druids were such proficient in

* Et hoc quoque cognovimus, quod virus Pelagianæ hæreseos apud vos denuo reviviscit.

poetry, philosophy, and theology, that the Britons and Albanians, as Toland, Whitaker, and Llhuyd assert, became their pupils.* We had glimmerings of religion too before the mission of St. Patrick; for St. Dima founded a Christian church at Adair, in the county of Limerick, A. D. 423, and about the same era his contemporaries, Saints Kieran, Declan, Keenan, and Albe, erected churches at Emely, Duleek, and Begeri.† “Prior,” says Colgan, “to the death of Dathy, in Italy, the learned Ibarus founded an academy at Wexford, where he instructed great numbers of the natives, as well as foreigners, in sacred and polite letters.”

We can, moreover, adduce many respectable authorities to support us in the opinion, that the gospel of Christ was preached at a very early period in our country. Bishop Usher and the learned Brudinus inform us, that *Man Suetus*, the first bishop and patron of Toul, who was canonized by Leo IX. was an Irishman. In the reign of Con, in the second century, St. Cathaldas, an Irishman, preached the faith in Italy, and was bishop and patron of Tarentum, and we have already related, that in the succeeding age, the renowned King Cormac O’Con became a convert to the Christian dispensation. O’Flaherty states, that the poet laureate of Nial the great, *Torna Eigis*, who is so celebrated in our annals for poetic powers and knowledge of languages, became a devoted proselyte to the creed of Christ, in consequence of his having read the Greek homilies of St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan.

But whatever progress Christianity had made, previous to the landing of our great apostle, the conversion of the entire kingdom was the glorious labour that must ever immortalize his name in the reverence of Irishmen.

It might be said of him, that, like Homer, seven cities contended for the honour of having given him birth, and only two of his numerous biographers (Colgan and the late erudite Dr. Lanagan, the profound author of the Ecclesiastical History of Ireland) have agreed in deciding on the place of his nativity. Some of these writers maintain that he was a native of Ireland, others argue, very learnedly, that it was in Scotland, that saint and poet-claiming nation, the apostle of Ireland first respired the mountain air, while more antiquarians, among whom were Jocelyn, Bishop Usher, Bede, and St. Gildas, have endeavored “to give a local habitation and a name” to the place of his birth, by fixing on St. David’s, in Wales.

*At this era the Irish were the most enlightened cultivators of letters in Europe, and so great was the respect in which their learning was held by the Saxons and north Britons, that the Druids of these countries, for ages, were initiated by the Irish Druids. “*Vide Toland’s Hist. of the British Druids.*” “St. Patrick found the Irish Druids who contended with him at Tara eminently versed in Grecian literature and astronomy.”—CAMDEN. “In the reign of the celebrated monarch Nial, the arch-Druid of Ireland was acknowledged the sovereign pontiff of the order, by the Druids of Gaul, Britain, and Scotland.”—WHITAKER. “Saint Patrick certainly brought no accession of literature to the Irish, as their Druids were then the most learned body of men in Europe, and stood unrivalled in the cultivation of letters.”—BISHOP STILLINGFLEET.

† BEGERI is a pretty little island, situated near the coast of Wexford, where St. Ibarus, in A. D. 42, founded a monastery and school. The Saint died on the 23d April, in the year 500.

But we think that Dr. Lanagan has settled the question, and proved to a conviction, which has staggered incredulity, that our apostle was born in the city of Tours, in France, whence he and his sisters were carried captives to Ireland, as we have already narrated, by king Nial, of the nine hostages. His father's name was Calphurn, and his mother, who was the sister of St. Martin, bishop of Turin, and a woman of singular beauty, was called *Conchessa*.

"The famous antiquarian O'Sullivan, in his biography of St. Patrick," observes the acute and classical Lanagan, quotes a line from the elegy written by St. Fiech, the bishop of Sletty, on his patron St. Patrick, which declares that the Irish missionary "*was a native of holy Tours.*" The year in which he was born is as much disputed as the place of his birth. William of Malmesbury, Stanihurst, and Cambrensis place it in 367 of the Christian era. "But Colgan and O'Sullivan brought strong chronological evidence and cogent arguments to prove that St. Patrick, whose baptismal name was *Succath*, was born in the year of 372."

We have before, when narrating the events of Nial's glorious reign, stated that St. Patrick and his two sisters were among the captives which that monarch carried off from France. It is supposed that his father and his mother, who were warm adherents of the Roman party in Tours, perished under the swords of Nial's soldiers. The officer, to whose share of captives St. Patrick, on his arrival in Ireland, fell, sold him to *Milcho Huanan*, the chieftain of the northern part of the *Dal Riada*, the present county of Antrim, who employed him in tending his swine, and in other menial offices, for seven years, at the end of which period, anxious to return to Tours, to his relations, he demanded his liberty, according to the custom of the country; but his master, not wishing to dispense with his services, refused to conform to the law of the land, and thus spurned his request.

With a sad and sorrowful heart, he had to resume the servile occupation of herding hogs, on *Slieve-miss*, in the county of Antrim. As he was one day, says Colgan, "bemoaning his irksome condition, and shedding an abundance of tears, he fell into a gentle slumber, when the angel Victor appeared to him, and bid him raise his spirits, for that God intended him for great purposes, and then requested of him to return to his native country with speed, where he should again manifest himself, in another vision, and announce to him the services which the Most High should require him to perform. As soon as the saint awoke he observed one of the hogs rooting up a massy bar of gold, which he seized on with joy, as sufficient means to pay his hard-hearted master the amount of his ransom. This treasure satisfied his task-master, who permitted him to depart from his territory. He hastened with all possible expedition to the sea-coast, where he found a ship about to sail for France, in which, after some difficulty, he was so fortunate as to procure a passage to his native land. The voyage is represented as very long and dangerous; but, at length, after being tempest-tossed for seventy-three days, the ship gained a French port. His uncles and aunts, according to the Abbe M'Geoghegan, were overjoyed at his return from

exile and slavery. Several writers of his life attribute many miracles to him in his youth ; but, as St. Fiech, his contemporary, who had better opportunities of knowing every thing of importance connected with his life, is entirely silent respecting them, and as one of the ablest divines of the Roman Catholic Church, the late DR. MILNER, in his refutation of Ledwich's Hypothesis regarding St. Patrick, disclaims the puerile stories of Jocelyn, the alleged miracles were, we opine, but the creation of pious fiction. "Let it be remembered," writes Dr. Lanagan, "that the saint himself, in his confession, attributes his captivity to his ignorance of the true God, and his disobedience to his laws."

We are not, it is true, very learned in theology ; but we found our opinion on the judgment of Dr. Milner and the dictates of reason, and declare that it would appear agreeable to the strictest principles of Christian philosophy to suppose, that conferring the power of performing miracles on a child is not consistent with the equal and impartial distribution of God's favours ; if, as it is generally concluded, a miracle be a gift bestowed only on extraordinary sanctity. For we believe it will be conceded, that there can be no sanctity without judgment, because no act can be good but so far as we know it to be so. But if sanctity or merit be founded on knowledge and intention, how can we suppose a child possessed of either ? To suppose him endowed with those powers of moral perception, is to suppose him an intellectual phenomenon, a being deriving its intelligence from a source inaccessible to the rest of men. A child, it will be admitted, never appears more engaging than while he appears robed in the white garb of baptismal innocence, for what is he without that simplicity which is the most amiable concomitant of infancy, but a gaudy flower without fragrance.

Every offensive deed in a state of invincible ignorance is an innocent crime. This position may appear to many as a paradox, yet it is certain that it is only when we are made acquainted with the nature of a good act that we are capable of committing an evil one ; for had our first parents never tasted of the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge, they would otherwise have been always innocent. But let us resume the narrative of our immediate subject.

During St. Patrick's residence amongst his friends, at Tours, he prepared himself for the church, with an assiduity of application worthy of the great task which he was destined to accomplish.

Having now finished his studies, and reached the twenty-third year of his age, he received from the hands of his venerable uncle, St. Martin, the clerical tonsure and the monastic habit. Shortly after being priested, we are informed, he saw in a vision a venerable looking man approaching him, holding in his hand, for presentation to the saint a letter, on which was emblazoned in letters of light, the words "*Vox Hibernigensium*," or the voice of the Hibernians ; and he thought, that while he was opening it, he heard the natives of Ireland invoking his mission to their country, in the most supplicating language. Should this story excite the cold smile of incredulity in the countenance of the religious sceptic, who shrewdly rejects all supernatural agency, we shall, for his satisfaction, endeavour to

show its natural probability without imputing it to the intervention of a miracle.

There is a certain power in the human mind by which it suffers itself to be irresistibly drawn to the exclusive contemplation of some interesting, or some endearing object, not only in the visive hour of night, but even when the sun dispenses his meridian beams; for the thoughts, influenced by feeling, flow directly into the engrossing sensation, carrying with them all the affections which that sensation is calculated to excite. In such an hour of mental abstraction, reason pays homage to the eagerness of desire, and the imagination strongly paints the object of its endearment, and calls into existence new images, which render it more vivid and impressive. Can we, then, be surprised if St. Patrick, who seems to have indulged an ardent desire for the conversion of the Irish nation, should be so strongly affected by the impulse of religious feelings as to fancy, in his dreams, the inhabitants of Ireland calling upon him to irradiate their minds with the luminous rays of truth? From the moment of his vision the Irish apostle felt impelled by a zealous wish of labouring for the Irish nation. He therefore resolved, contrary to the wishes of his relatives, to travel through foreign countries in order to enrich and enlarge his mind, so as to qualify it to accomplish his great ultimate design—the propagation of the gospel in Ireland. He entered the monastery of *Marmoutiers*, near Tours, where he devoted three years to prayer and penance. On the death of his uncle, St. Martin, an event which took place in that monastery, A. D. 402, he set out for Rome, where he joined the canons regular of St. John of Lateran. In the house of these ecclesiastics he practiced the most austere religious duties, and also sedulously applied himself to an extensive course of studies, in Greek and Roman literature, as well as in the dogmas of theology.

From Rome, he made a tour through the Mediterranean isles, in several of the abbeys of which he sojourned, where his preaching and piety acquired great fame. In 418, St. Germain, a friend and fellow-student of our apostle, being presented by the Pope with the Bishopric of Auxerre, he invited St. Patrick to assist him in the sacred duties of his see. With this prelate, he remained several years, endowing his mind with all the virtues of an apostle, preparatory to the great ministry to which he so devoutly aspired. When the news of the death of St. Palladius reached the good bishop of Auxerre, he despatched St. Patrick to Rome, with recommendatory letters, soliciting Pope Celestine to appoint Patrick the successor of that pious missionary. The sovereign pontiff, in consequence, received our apostle with testimonies of the warmest esteem, and, having invested him with apostolic authority, sent him forth to preach the gospel to that nation, whose conversion had been for many years the only subject of all his anxieties and pastoral solicitude.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Arrival of St. Patrick in Ireland.—His disputation with the Druids.—The success of his mission.—He converts the Queen of Ireland, and builds several churches.—Singular occurrence at the baptism of the king of Munster.

THE saint having received plenary authority from the sovereign Pontiff of the Christian church, embarked for Ireland. He was accompanied by twenty monks,—“divines,” says Bishop Usher, “distinguished for their learning and piety.” By stress of weather, the ship in which the missionary and his disciples sailed, was driven into a port in Cornwall, where she had to remain for some weeks to be refitted. During the time occupied in repairing the vessel, we are told by Probus, that our saint made a journey into Wales, where by his eloquent preaching, he succeeded in converting many of the natives to the religion of Christ. As soon as the ship was ready for sea, he and his attendants again embarked and set sail for Ireland. After a prosperous voyage, the saint and his disciples landed at Wicklow; but no sooner did the Druids of that place learn the object of St. Patrick, than they persuaded the natives to drive back the pious adventurers to their ship. To avoid the danger that menaced them, they again went on board, and sailed along the eastern coast of Ireland, until they arrived opposite Skerries, a fishing port, twenty miles north of Dublin.

Here, on a rocky promontory, called still, in commemoration of the event, “*Holm Patrick*,” or the haven of Patrick, our missionaries were suffered to land without opposition, A. D. 432. They had not been long, however, in Skerries, before they were apprehended by the orders of *Dichu*, the chieftain of Fingal, and borne in chains to his palace.

When our apostle was brought before this chief, and the Druids of the district, he defended the principles of his creed, and the integrity of his motive in visiting Ireland, in a Grecian oration,* with such commanding eloquence as not only procured his acquittal, as well as that of his followers, but made converts of the chieftain, his lady, and several of his vassals.

From Skerries he proceeded to Saul, in the County of Down, where he built a church, and a monastery. Having made converts of the inhabitants of the county of Down, he repaired to the county of Antrim, with a pious view of rescuing his old master, *Milcho*, from the delusion of paganism. But the hoary chief, on seeing his former servant arrayed in episcopal robes, and bearing in his hand a golden crosier, indignantly exclaimed—“Why, thou hog-herd! art thou so silly as to think, that with thy gaudy staff and white book, thou canst estrange me from the faith of my noble fathers? Away vassal! and for thy insolence, go take again my hogs in charge.” The saint listened meekly to this ebullition of angry scorn, and then

* “The Greek language was fluently spoken by all the Irish of rank at this era; but the Latin language, being that of their enemies, the Romans, excepting the Druids, no person in the country spoke it.”—VALLANCEY.

began to remonstrate with Milcho, on the warmth of his language and the gloom of his error, which he did with a power of reasoning and eloquence, that won over to the gospel *Guassat*, the son, and two of the daughters of the inflexible chieftain. Their example was followed by the greater part of the chieftains of Antrim. It is related by Jocelyn, that Milcho was so enraged at his son and daughter's secession from the ancient faith of their ancestors, that he collected all his valuable effects in one of his apartments, and, after he had set fire to his palace, with desperate indignation, plunged himself into the middle of the devouring blaze. We should, however, mention, that Dr. Lanagan discredits the traditionary story of this alleged immolation of the chief of Antrim, on such a funeral pile. Guassat afterwards was consecrated bishop of *Treffin*, that district of country now comprehended in the counties of Westmeath and Longford. His two sisters received the veil from the hands of St. Patrick. These ladies then repaired to Granard, the then capital of their brother's see, where they erected a convent, of which they became the abbesses. To enumerate all the churches and abbeys which St. Patrick erected, during three years in Leinster and Ulster, would require the limits of a volume.

He proceeded from Antrim to Drogheda, where he repaired the churches built by Palladius, and made many converts. Leaving one of his disciples to attend to the faithful in Drogheda, he set out to pay a visit to the school of the learned IBARUS at Wexford. On his first introduction to that renowned philosopher, he found that fame had not misrepresented the depth or variety of his erudition. Though he was the ablest champion of Druidism, our apostle, by his inspired arguments, and his mild and condescending deportment, succeeded in winning him over as a proselyte to the religion of the Gospel.*

Hearing at this juncture, A. D. 435, that the national estates were to meet at Tara, he formed the resolution of repairing there, in order to gain, if possible, some converts among the Irish princes, well aware that the example of the great had then a strong influence over the minds of the people. We have fully related, in the former chapters of this history, the religious ceremonies with which the festival of Bel, was celebrated, on every May day. On the eve of Bel, all culinary fires were religiously extinguished, in all parts of the kingdom, in order that the Druids might supply every hearth from the consecrated fire, which ever burned in the temple of *Uisneach*. To light a fire on the day dedicated to the deity of the Pagan Irish, was counted the most inexpiable act of impiety. Our saint resolved to dissolve the delusion of that superstitious observance of the Druids. In pursuance of this daring resolution, the saint kindled a large fire on a hill, adjoining Tara, whose vivid glare soon brightened the spires of the Druidical temple. The sight of such a blaze of unholy fire horrified the superstitious, while it filled

* "St. Patrick was amazed at the profundity of learning and the force of logic, which that celebrated philosopher brought to bear upon the arguments advanced by the holy missionary. The conversion of Ibarus paved the way for Christianity in Ireland."—*Bishop Hutchinson's Defence of Irish History.*

the Druids with alarm and consternation. The arch-Druid hastened to the king, and told him, that if the impious man who had the criminal boldness of lighting that fire, was not instantly put to death, he and his successors should rule forever in Ireland. This, indeed, was a measure on the part of the saint, that nothing less than a confidence in the divine assistance, which can scarcely be termed human, could justify; and the event proved that he was directed by higher counsels than those which result from human sagacity.

At the instance of the Druids, Laoghaire, the monarch, sent a guard to arrest Patrick and his disciples, and to bring them in fetters before him. When the saint was arraigned at the tribunal of justice for impiety, he evinced such fortitude and firmness, as impressed the whole assembly, save the envious Druids, with a high idea of his character. In his disputation with the Pagan Priests, he displayed rhetorical talents of an exalted order. Nothing could intimidate or confuse him, for he spoke as if inspiration prompted his tongue. The saint, fired with divine zeal to accomplish the will of his master, and to manifest his doctrine, at the peril of his life, openly confessed the word of life, and vehemently denounced the fallacy of the doctrines, by which the Druids had so long imposed upon mankind.

The disputation continued in a Druidical grove, contiguous to the palace of Tara, for three days, engrossing the attention not only of the monarch and princes, but of the national representatives. The Druids asked the saint if he would consent to prove the divine inspiration of his "*white book*" by the trial of the ordeal, to which he readily assented. They said that the book of their sacred mysteries, which was composed of tanned oak bark, and bound in a cover of plated gold, ornamented with precious stones, should be flung into a cistern of water, at the same instant that the saint should likewise throw in his white volume, and that whichever book floated, should be regarded as the book of truth. The metallic volume, of course, sunk, while the white book floated on the surface of the water.

The Druids, with all their learning, not perceiving the natural cause of the sinking of their book, admitted that a miracle had been wrought in favour of the Bible of our apostle. When in the course of his oration, he came to speak of the holy Trinity, the Druids boldly asserted that nothing could be more erroneous or absurd, than the doctrine he broached on that subject, for it was founded in moral and physical impossibility, as, said they, "three could not exist in one." "To prove the reality and possibility of the existence of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," rejoined Saint Patrick, "I have only to pluck up this humble plant, on which we have trodden," (as he held up triumphantly the shamrock to their view) "and convince you that truth can be attested by the simplest symbol of illustration." The Druids felt confounded at the facility with which he defeated an objection that they had deemed impregnable and insuperable. This was the origin of the shamrock's becoming one of the national emblems of our country. As the mysteries of Druidism could neither be supported by reason, nor sanctioned by a divine commission, we may easily conclude that its priests could have little success in op-

posing a doctrine that was founded on the immutable principles of eternal truth. Accordingly, we find the Irish Queen becoming an immediate convert to the Christian creed. The conversion of the queen led to that of almost all the ladies of the court; and the Druids themselves either became the proselytes of truth, or endeavoured to screen from public scrutiny a doctrine which they could not defend, by avoiding a conference with the apostle, who was guided by the beacon of heavenly inspiration. At the great annual exhibition of the Tailtean games,* to witness which, all the beauty, grandeur, and chivalry of Ireland congregated, St. Patrick made a host of proselytes, as the queen submitted to a public baptism before the assembled multitude.

As yet our apostle confined himself to the northern parts of the kingdom; but Aongus, king of Munster, hearing of his fame, and being himself desirous of embracing the new religion, sent two of his principal poets to Tara, to invite the saint to his court. He speedily availed himself of the invitation, and set out on his journey to Cashel.

On the saint's arrival at Cashel, he was escorted to the palace by the king and the principal nobility of Munster, who had gone out into the suburbs of the city to bid him welcome. As soon as the first courtesies of his reception were over, the Druids challenged him to a disputation, in which his inspired eloquence gained for him another signal triumph. The king was so convinced of "the truths divine which came mended from his tongue," that he solemnly abjured Druidism, and in the fervour of his enthusiasm, solicited the saint to administer to him on the instant the sacrament of baptism. This ceremony was attended with an incident which has been immortalized by the graphic pencil of the Irish Apelles, JAMES BARRY. The saint was so overjoyed at the conversion of the king, that in precipitately attempting to fasten the javelin pointed end of his crosier in the floor, he unconsciously transfixed the regal foot. The prince, convinced that this was part of the holy rite, bore the pain with heroic fortitude; nor did St. Patrick observe his error, until the apartment was deluged with blood. Barry's famous painting of this memorable occurrence was pronounced a master-piece by Burke.

Though it is a matter of some doubt whether Laoghaire, the monarch, was converted to the religion of the Redeemer of the world, we may yet conclude, that he was not hostile to the interests of that creed, which his wife and daughters had adopted. The saint had not, therefore, to contend with royal opposition; as we learn from history, that he assisted with the monarch's permission, at a public examination of the national records.

While the holy man remained at Cashel, he was visited by the saints Albe and Declan, the first of whom he consecrated Archbishop of Munster, and the latter Bishop of the Deasies, or Waterford.

* *The Tailtean Games*, which were held at Kells, in the county of Meath, for several ages, were celebrated by feats of chivalry, athletic strength, and of other contending powers. By referring to the second chapter of our history, the reader will find the origin of these Olympic games in Ireland. They were held every year, for fifteen days before, and fifteen days after, the first of August.

"After this," says Hanmer's Chronicle, "they blessed the king, and giving the kiss of peace, each saint returned to his particular charge." St. Patrick having now firmly established his authority over the Irish ecclesiastics, and succeeded in converting the greater part of the nation from the darkness of Paganism to the divine light of revelation, was generally consulted on every matter of moment, by the princes of Ireland.

Prior to his leaving Cashel, he superintended the building of the Cathedral of that city. On his return to Tara, he visited the city of Dublin, but the inhabitants, so far from hearkening to his preaching, assailed him with contumely, and compelled him to abandon the capital precipitately. As he journeyed to Tara, he met two of the Irish monarch's brothers, Connell and Carbre, to whom he preached the gospel of peace; the former believed and was baptized, but the latter insolently refused to listen to the expostulation of our apostle. During the years 434 and 436, the pious missionary employed himself in building churches and abbeys in Meath and Louth. On his second visit to Tara, the two princesses royal, *Ethe* and *Fedeline*, followed the example of the Queen, their mother, by conforming to the injunctions of Christianity. These princesses afterwards took the veil, and one became an abbess in the monastery of Trim, and the other in the nunnery of Drogheda. Colgan has written their lives.

CHAPTER XL.

The Biography of St. Patrick, continued.

It will be recollected by the readers of this history, that from the days of the monarch *Ollamh Fodhla*, it was customary, during the session of the national estates, for three Druids, assisted by the most eminent class of the Irish literati, to inspect and revise the national records. On the present occasion, the literary committee consisted of Dubhtagh, the royal laureate, Feargus, the antiquary, Roso, the genealogist, and St. Patrick. The monarch and the king of Ulster were present at the sittings of the committee. The apostle possessing great influence over the mind of the laureate, whom he had converted, prevailed upon him to concur in any resolution he might propose, to dispel the mists of druidical superstition from the understanding of our progenitors. He, therefore, to give a salutary effect and dissemination to the precepts of the gospel, and to impress the Irish people with a reverence for, and a conviction of, the truth of the divine counsels of heaven, in the warmth of his zeal, persuaded the committee to commit near four hundred volumes of poetry, history, and antiquity to the flames. Among the books thus destroyed were the autographs of Ossian. By this sacrifice, which was judged by the apostle necessary for the firm and permanent establishment

of the Christian dispensation, our ancient literature, rich, varied, and peculiar, was almost annihilated. The saint was no doubt led to this determination of burning the books by the apprehension, that if he suffered any trace or relic of the heathen superstition to remain, the people might relapse into their former errors. "Indeed," says the learned O'Flanagan, "if the fact of St. Patrick having destroyed all the books in the archives of Tara, that regarded heathen worship, were not, as it is, supported by the concurrent testimony of all our historical writers, I should reject it altogether. But our apostle deemed the expedient, which the lovers of Irish literature must ever deplore, as absolutely necessary, to make way for the sacred truths of revelation."

It is also on record that St. Patrick, having observed our history deduced only from Phœnius, and wishing to associate it with that of the Jews, made, by the consent of the national council, Phœnius the son of Baath, the son of Magog, the son of Japeth. We must, indeed, concede that it is true, that this might have been the means of reconciling the old Irish to a religion virtually the same with that practised by their primogenial ancestors in Egypt; but whether our apostle would have recourse to any artifice, such as might even be denominated a pious fraud, in order to establish the doctrine of his divine master, is a circumstance much, in our opinion, to be doubted. It is to be hoped that he had too great a respect for the purity and character of his religion—a religion whose essence is truth and justice, and too reverential and strong a confidence in the divine assistance, to have thus resorted to deception. But this is a question for the inquiry of theological casuists. The apostle having so far succeeded at Tara, made preparations for a journey into Connaught. "In the course of this journey," says Moore, "he turned aside a little from the direct road, to visit that frightful haunt of cruelty and superstition, the Plain of Slaughter, in the county of Leitrim, where, from time immemorial, had stood the Druidical idol Crom-Cruach, called sometimes also Cean Groith, or Head of the Sun. This image, to which, as to Moloch of old, young children were offered up in sacrifice, had been an object of worship, we are told, with every successive colony by which the island had been conquered. For St. Patrick, however, was reserved the glory of destroying both idol and worship; and a large church was now erected by him in the place where these monstrous rites had been so long solemnized."* He travelled through the counties of Roscommon, Galway, and Mayo, and in the course of this peregrination, built many churches, and made numerous converts. At this period, elated with the success of his mission, and inspired with gratitude to God for the miraculous powers delegated to him, he retired, during the season of Lent, to a lofty mountain, in the county of Mayo, called *Cruhan-Achuil*, or the Eagle mountain, for the purpose of employing so holy a

* "When we hear of Churches erected by St. Patrick, very many of which were certainly of much later foundation, we are not to understand such edifices as are so called in our days, but humble buildings made of hurdles or wattles, clay and thatch, according to the ancient fashion of Ireland, and which could be put together in a very short time."—*Lanagan*, chap. v. note 74.

period in prayer and penance. According to the traditionary story, related by Jocelyn, it was from this mountain St. Patrick drove all the venomous creatures into the sea. But Colgan gives up this popular legend, for it is well known, that there were no poisonous reptiles in Ireland since the arrival of the Milesians.* "While thus occupied," says Moore, "the various sea-fowl and birds of prey that would naturally be attracted to the spot, by the sight of a living creature in so solitary a place,† were transformed, by the fancy of the superstitious, into flocks of demons which came to tempt and disturb the holy man from his devotions. After this interval of seclusion, he proceeded northwards to the country then called Tir-malgaidh, the modern barony of Tyrawley.

He was now in the neighbourhood of the wood of Foclut, near the Ocean, from whence the voices of the Irish had called to him in his dream; and, whether good fortune alone was concerned in effecting the accomplishment of the omen, or, as is most likely, the thought that he was specially appointed to this place gave fresh impulse to his zeal, the signal success which actually attended his mission in this district sufficiently justified any reliance he might have placed upon the dream. Arriving soon after the death of the king of that territory, and at the moment when his seven sons, having just terminated a dispute concerning the succession, were, together with a great multitude of people, collected on the occasion, St. Patrick re-

* "Solinus, who wrote some hundred years before the coming of St. Patrick to Ireland, lauds the country for being free from pestiferous reptiles. The fact is, that never has there been a serpent seen in Ireland since the arrival of the Milesians. The very clay of the country has been known to kill snakes, some few years ago in Rome."—LYNCH.

† "St. Donat, an Irishman, who was bishop of Ferula, near Florence, in the tenth century, in describing his country, says—

"Far westward lies an Isle of ancient fame,
By nature blessed, and *Scotia* is her name:
Enroll'd in books, exhaustless in her store,
Of veiny silver, and of golden ore.
Her fruitful soil forever teems with wealth,
With gems her waters—and her air with health;
Her verdant fields with milk and honey flow,
Her woolly fleeces vie with virgin snow;
Her waving furrows float with bearded corn,
And arms and arts her envied sons adorn.
No savage bear with lawless fury roves,
Nor ravenous lion through the peaceful groves;
No poison there infects, nor scaly snake
Creeps through the grass, nor frogs annoy the lake:
An Island worthy of her pious race,
In war triumphant, and unmatched in peace."

Flemming's Miscellanies.

† "Multitudo avium venit circa illum, ita ut non posset videre faciem cœli et terræ ac maris propter aves.

"Jocelyn is the only biographer of St. Patrick that has spoken of the expulsion by him of serpents and other venomous creatures from Ireland. From his book this story made its way into other tracts, and even into some breviaries. Had such a wonderful circumstance really occurred, it would have been recorded in our Annals and other works, long before Jocelyn's time."—*Lanagan, Ecclesiast. Hist.* chap. v. note 108. The learned Colgan, in exposing the weakness of this story, alleges, that in the most ancient documents of Irish history, there is not the least allusion to venomous animals having ever been found in this country.

paired to the assembly, and, by his preaching, brought over to the faith of Christ not only the seven princes, including the new king, but also twelve thousand persons more, all of whom he soon after baptized. It is supposed that to these western regions of Ireland the Saint alludes, in his Confession, where he stated that he had visited remote districts where no missionary had been before ;—an assertion important, as plainly implying that, in the more accessible parts of the country, Christianity had, before his time, been preached and practised.” Jocelyn further tells us, that while on the retreat on the summit of this mountain, he was enabled “by the power of God, to live, like Christ, Moses, and Elias, for the space of forty days, without any sustenance but water.”

But Dr. Lanagan treats this relation as a fiction. It might be observed, that although the ancient writers were scrupulous in adhering to facts, they still felt no hesitation in embellishing the narratives of these facts with the colourings of fancy. The most distinguished Roman Catholic divines have censured Jocelyn for falsifying the conduct and ministry of St. Patrick. That our apostle performed miracles, though not all that has been related of him, will not be doubted, except, indeed, by those who believe that the conversion of a great nation from a popular creed, associated with the most glorious eras in Irish history, to Christianity, was a matter of perfect indifference to God ; and that he looks with equal eyes on the Christian and the infidel. Our creed was established by miracles—they are the very basis of the Christian church ; or, in spite of the specious sophistry of Hume, it must be admitted by every believer, that the power of performing miracles is the only means which can possibly be conceived of confirming a divine commission ; and when this commission is given for a singularly momentous and important purpose, it is worse than scepticism to deny that God would stamp it with the sacred seal, by which alone it can be recognized. On the approach of Easter, after he had finished his devotions on the mountain, he, with his disciples, repaired to the court of Hy Malia, or O’Maily, on the banks of Lough Corb, in the county of Mayo, the chief of the territory, where he was cordially received. Here, if we can credit some of the writers of his life, he not only baptized the chief, his lady, and seven children, but twelve thousand people, who were “attracted there,” says Colgan, “by the fame of his piety and miracles.” At this place he erected a church and an abbey. Were we to give a detail of all the churches and monasteries he built, we could fill two quarto volumes with the biography of St. Patrick. To such of our readers as wish to have a comprehensive, circumstantial, and authentic life of the apostle of Ireland, we would beg to recommend the Ecclesiastical History of Ireland, written by the late Dr. LANAGAN, an eminent Irish divine, and an historian, whose work exhibits the learning of the scholar, the acuteness of the philosopher, and the research of the antiquarian.

The biography given, in the *Lives of the Saints*, of our apostle, by the Rev. Alban Butler, is a mere compilation from the silly and puerile fictions of Jocelyn. We might observe here, that the number of histories written of the life of St. Patrick have only served to

confuse each other, and to render doubtful what would have been otherwise evident. Bishop Usher, guided by historic documents, placed in the college of Oxford and Cambridge, enumerates sixty-six authors who have honoured the memory of our patron saint with biographies. Those, however, that are chiefly worthy of notice, are his *Confessions*; his letter, preserved by Colgan, to Carotic, and some of the lives written by his immediate disciples. The Confessions of St. Patrick were written by himself. He commences his narrative of his own failings and faults, with the words "*Ego Patri-cius peccator*," I, Patrick, a sinner. The modesty, and humility, and mildness that recommend this detail, prove that our apostle emulated the virtues of his heavenly master. In that relation of the private thoughts of his heart, and of the venial errors of his life, he speaks of few miracles, but of many visions, in which God pointed out to him the path he was to pursue, and illuminate with the rays of the gospel. It is not unworthy of notice, and perhaps no small proof of their authenticity, that in the account of these visions there is nothing to be met with, either vain, puerile, improbable, or unbecoming the dignity and sacredness of the great work which he was called upon to accomplish, or of the majesty and mightiness of the celestial Being, by whom he was inspired with the resolution of undertaking so arduous and difficult a task as the conversion of Ireland. The subject of his letter to *Carotic*, the tyrant chieftain of east *Urial*, in the county of Armagh, was a cruel and barbarous action committed by this sanguinary oppressor, who, though a pretended Christian, slew and massacred a large number of converts to Christianity, while the saint was in the virtual act of administering to them the holy elements of the blessed eucharist; and bore off others, who escaped the edge of the sword, as captives, and sold them to the Picts.

Our apostle, trusting in omnipotent protection, represented to the barbarous and ruthless slaughterer, in this letter, the diabolical enormity of his crime, and demanded back the prisoners; but the despot contemning the holy man's expostulations, and regarding them with derision, he now promulgated a pastoral charge, addressed to the Irish people, in which he loudly denounced the cruelty and injustice of the tyrant, and declared that the wrath of divine vengeance would annihilate him, unless he made adequate penance, to appease offended heaven, and ample reparation to the friends of his victims, as well as the redemption of the captives whom he sold to the Picts. This letter rendered Carotic detestable even among his own followers, and its threats so terrified him, that in order to escape the horrors of his mind, he destroyed his life, by precipitating himself from the summit of a high rock into the sea.

The Confession of St. Patrick, and his letter to Carotic, are quoted by Usher, Ware, Colgan, Bolandus, and other writers, with glowing encomiums.

"St. Patrick's Confession," says the Abbe M'Geoghegan, "is marked with such characteristics of truth, that, as a composition, it would stand by itself, though it had been quoted by no writer what-

ever, and at the same time nothing can be discovered in it that can excite suspicion."

The last church which our apostle built in Connaught was that of Sligo, then called *Slegeach*, or the bay of shells, over which he placed one of his disciples, Bron, as bishop. From thence he proceeded to the county of Donegal, where he caused several churches and abbeys to be built. He visited the counties of Derry and Tyrone, where he preached the gospel with great success, and built the cathedrals of Derry and Clogher. Leaving bishops in charge of these sees, he journeyed eastward, passed the river Bann, at *Cuibrathen*, now Coleraine. After having erected a church and abbey in Coleraine, he directed his steps southward, and continued his course until he arrived at Armagh, when he became so enamoured of the beauty of the spot, and the charming scenery that encircles it, that he resolved to erect here a cathedral, which in magnitude of space and size, as well as majesty of architecture, should exceed all the other churches which he had founded in Ireland. In our account of the ancient architecture of Ireland, in the first volume of this work, we have already given a description of the cathedral and abbey of Armagh, so that we must decline treading over the same grounds again. St. Patrick began to build, according to Bishop Usher, the metropolitan cathedral of Ireland, A. D. 445.

In addition to the immense number of churches which he caused to be built, he likewise founded the monasteries of Slane, Trion, and Domhuach-Phaedraig, in Meath; Finglas, near Dublin; Kille, (church,) Auxelle, near Kildare; Achad-Abla, in the county of Wexford; Galen, in the county of Carlow; Ardagh, in the county of Longford,—Inisbo-Fion and Inis-Cloghran, in the same county; Lough and Drumiskin, in the county of Louth; St. Peter and St. Paul's abbey, in Armagh; Saul and Nendrim Abbey, in the county of Down; Rath-Muighe, in the county of Antrim; Coleraine abbey, in the county of Derry; Lough-Derg, in the county of Donegal; Clogher, in the county of Tyrone; Inis-Muigh-Samh, in the county of Fermanagh; Cluan-Feis, Tuam, and Kille Chonall, in the county of Galway; Inis-More, in the county of Roscommon; and Druim-Lias, in the county of Sligo. He also founded the monasteries of Cluan-Bronach and Druimches, in the county of Longford; the abbey of Linnear Carrick-Fergus; of Ross-Ben-Choir, in the county of Clare; of Temple-Bride, and Temple-na-Feacta, in the county of Armagh; of Cluain-Dubhain, in the county of Tyrone; of Ross-Oirther, in the county of Fermanagh; and of Killaracht, in the county of Roscommon.

After finishing the cathedral church of Armagh, he repaired to the city of Dublin, in the hope of being more successful now in rescuing the inhabitants from the dominion of paganism than he had been during his last visit. At the period of his arrival, an occurrence took place which not only afforded him an opportunity of displaying his miraculous faculty, but a facility of converting Alphin, the chieftain of Dublin, his family, and all his people, to the true faith. On the evening of the saint's arrival, as we are informed by Colgan, the infant son of the prince fell into the Liffey and was

drowned. The grief of Alphin and his lady, in consequence, was sad and inconsolable. The fame of the miracles wrought by our apostle preceded him to Dublin; and some of the females of the court being Christians, they humbly suggested to the princess to apply to Saint Patrick, and beseech him to restore the child. She, eager to listen to any suggestion that related in the remotest degree to the recovery of the life of her beloved son, flew to the lodgings of the saint, and with streaming eyes threw herself on her knees before him, and in that posture, in the most moving terms implored him to restore her child to life. He, touched with her anguish and wailings, accompanied her to the palace, where the body of the child, just after being taken out of the water, lay. The moment he was conducted to the corpse, he fell on his knees, prayed fervently for some time, and then, touching the child with the *staff of Jesus*, (as his crosier was called,) it instantly arose, and rushed into the arms of its transported mother. This miracle sufficiently demonstrated that St. Patrick was a divine minister, clothed in the authority of heaven; and, in consequence, the chief, his family and people, professed themselves Christians, and submitted to the sacrament of baptism.

The chieftain, as a token of his gratitude, made him a present of the present site of St. Patrick's Cathedral, and the portions of land adjoining it. Here, A. D. 445, our apostle erected St. Patrick's Cathedral.

"Notwithstanding," writes Moore, "however, the docile and devotional spirit which he found everywhere, among the lower classes, and the singular forbearance with which, among the highest, even the rejecters of his doctrine tolerated his preaching it, yet that his life was sometimes in danger appears from his own statements; and an instance or two are mentioned by his biographers, where the peril must have been imminent.* On one of these occasions he was indebted for his life to the generosity of his charioteer, Odran; who, hearing of the intention of a desperate chieftain, named Failge, to attack the Saint when on his way through the King's County, contrived, under the pretence of being fatigued, to induce his master to take the driver's seat, and so, being mistaken for St. Patrick, received the lance of the assassin in his stead.† The death of this charioteer is made more memorable by the remarkable circumstance, that he is the only martyr on record who, in the course of

* In his Confession, the Saint makes mention of the sufferings of himself and followers, and of "the precautions he took against giving occasion to a general persecution, using, among other means, that of making presents to the unconverted kings, some of whom, however, while obstinate themselves, allowed their sons to follow him:—"Interim præmia," he says, "dabam regibus proter quod dabam mercedem filliis ipsorum qui mecum ambulant, et nihil comprehenderunt me cum comitibus meis."

† Among the specimens of Irish manuscripts given by Astle, there is one from a tract relating to this event:—"This specimen," says the writer, "is taken from an ancient manuscript of two tracts, relating to the old municipal laws of Ireland. The first contains the trial of Enna, brother of Laogarius, chief king of Ireland, for the murder of Oraine, (Odran) chariot-driver of St. Patrick, before Dumphac, (Dubtach) the king's chief bard, and the sentence passed thereon, about the year 430."

this peaceful crusade in Ireland, fell a victim by the hands of an Irishman. On another occasion, while visiting Lecale, the scene of his earliest labours, a design was formed against his life by the captain of a band of robbers, which he not only baffled by his intrepidity and presence of mind, but succeeded in converting the repentant bandit into a believer. Full of compunction, this man, whose name was Maccaldus, demanded of St. Patrick what form of penance he ought to undergo for his crimes; and the nature of the task which the Saint imposed upon him is highly characteristic of the enterprising cast of his own mind. The penitent was to depart from Ireland immediately; to trust himself, alone, to the waves, in a leathern boat, and taking with him nothing but a coarse garment, land on the first shore to which the wind might bear him, and there devote himself to the service of God. This command was obeyed; and it is added that, wafted by the wind to the Isle of Man, Maccaldus found there two holy bishops, by whom he was most kindly received, and who directed him in his penitential works with so much spiritual advantage, that he succeeded them in the bishopric of the island, and became renowned for his sanctity.

"The most active foes St. Patrick had to encounter were to be found naturally among those Magi or Druids, who saw in the system he was introducing the downfall of their own religion and power. An attempt made against his life, shortly before his grand work of conversion in Tyrawley, is said to have originated among that priesthood, and to have been averted only by the interference of one of the convert princes. Among the civil class of the *Literati*, however, his holy cause found some devoted allies. It has been already seen that the arch-poet Dubtacth became very early a convert; and we find the Saint, in the course of a journey through Leinster, paying a visit to this bard's residence, in Hy-Kinsellagh, and consulting with him upon matters relating to the faith. The arch-poet's disciple, too, Fiech, was here admitted to holy orders by St. Patrick, and, becoming afterwards bishop of Sletty, left behind him a name as distinguished for piety as for learning.

"The event, in consequence of which the Saint addressed his indignant letter to Coroticus, the only authentic writing, besides the Confession, we have from his hand, is supposed to have taken place during his stay on the Munster coast, about the year 450.* A British prince, named Coroticus, who, though professing to be a Christian, was not the less, as appears from his conduct, a pirate and persecutor, had landed with a party of armed followers, while St. Patrick was on the coast, and set about plundering a large district in which, on the very day before, the Saint had baptized and confirmed a vast number of converts.† Having murdered several of

* In the chronology of the events of St. Patrick's life, I have throughout followed Dr. Lanigan, than whom, in all respects, there cannot be a more industrious or trustworthy guide.

† "De sanguine innocentium Christianorum, quos ego innumeros Deo genui, atque in Christo confirmavi, postera, die qua chrisma neophyti in veste candida flagrabat in fronte ipsorum."—*Confess.*

"We have here, in a few words," says Dr. Lanigan, "an exact description of the ancient discipline, according to which the sacrament of confirmation or chrism

these persons, the pirates carried off a considerable number of captives, and then sold them as slaves to the Picts and Scots, who were at that time engaged in their last joint excursion into Britain. A letter despatched by the saint to the marauders, requesting them to restore the baptized captives, and part of the booty, having been treated by them with contumely, he found himself under the necessity of forthwith issuing the solemn epistle which has come down to us, in which, denouncing Coroticus and his followers as robbers and murderers, he, in his capacity of "Bishop established in Ireland," declares them to be excommunicated."

For fourteen years after this period, he continued to travel through, and build churches, in all parts of the kingdom, so that in 460, a year prior to his going to Rome, the religion of the gospel was disseminated in every corner of the country. "Thus," writes O'Halloran, "by the prudence, moderation and good sense of the apostle of Ireland, was the whole nation brought to acknowledge the holy religion of Christ; and this wonderful reform was conducted with so much wisdom, that it produced not the least disturbance or confusion. The Druids and their votaries were unmolested; and Christian bishops were appointed to succeed the *arch-Flamens* by those families only who, being converted, had a right to such nomination."

Our saint, now that the entire people of Ireland had conformed to his creed, resolved to repair to the court of the supreme head of the Christian church, to render an account of the happy success of his mission in Ireland. After sailing from Dublin, he touched at the Isle of Man, then an Irish colony, with a view of converting the people, who were at that time immersed in the ignorance of heathenism.

CHAPTER XLI.

The Biography of St. Patrick continued. The cavils of Dr. Ledwich answered.

LEAVING St. German, one of his monks, in charge of the Christian community in the Isle of Man, he took his departure for Rome. On his arrival at the Pope's palace, he was honoured by the most distinguished notice from his Holiness, and the college of cardinals.

Until now he bore the appellation of *Succath Magonias*, but the sovereign pontiff, for the purpose of testifying his satisfaction and approbation of the saint's success in Ireland, conferred on him the Patrician order. Patricius, therefore, was only his title, though it afterwards became his name.

The Pope, not content with honouring our apostle thus, gave him also a pall, investing him with full powers to act not only as Legate,

used to be administered immediately after baptism by the bishop, in case he were the baptizer or present on the occasion. We see also the white garment of the newly baptized."

but as Archbishop of Armagh, and primate of all Ireland. He returned to his see of Armagh in the beginning of the year 448, where, in conjunction with Auxilius and Isernius, he summoned all the Irish clergy to a national council. Here, it is stated by Jocelyn, he nominated thirty bishops, in virtue of his legantine authority. The canons of this memorable synod are, it is said by Taaffe, still extant in the archives of the Vatican. "In the eighth canon," writes Colgan, "are the rules and regulations of the ancient combat for the trial of truth, which provided—'that if a clerk become surety for a heathen, and be deceived, he shall pay the debt; but if he enters into the lists with him, he shall be put out of the pale of the holy Roman Catholic church.'"

At the synod of Armagh he established the authority of the church on a solid foundation. He divided the kingdom into sees, deaneries, rectories, and parishes, over which he placed eminent ecclesiastics of learning and piety.

The church government which he now combined, organized, and consolidated, was in its form and details assimilated to that practised in the papal territories. It is a remarkable fact, that the sees which he then established, notwithstanding the change of religion, are continued within the limits which he defined, down to the present day. In this convocation, the see of Emly was given to St. Ailbe, Ardmore to St. Declan, and that of *Aghavoe*, now Ossory, to St. Kieran.*

* "St. Patrick and his companions having rested and refreshed themselves some time at Liverpool, where they preached the gospel, and converted many hundreds of the inhabitants. On the spot where he performed those miracles which wrought the conversion, the inhabitants erected a cross in honour and memory thereof, and called it by his name, which to this very day it bears. From thence the saint and his disciples went to the Isle of Man, where he placed St. German, a canon of the Lateran church, as bishop."—*Seacome's History of the Isle of Man, Liverpool edition, A. D. 1741.*

It may be interesting to some of the readers of this history, to be furnished with the names of the Bishops which our saint appointed at this synod, to the different sees in Ireland. A. D. 455.

He resigned the arch prelacy of Armagh to his beloved scholar, St. Benignus. The see of Clonard, now Meath, which then, and down to the year 1153, comprehended the bishoprics of Duleek, Kells, Trim, Ardbracken, Slane, Dunshaughlin, was confided to St. Finian, the famous poet, philosopher, and divine. To the see of Clogher he appointed M'Cartin, the son of a powerful chieftain of the county of Tyrone. The cathedral of Clogher was built by St. Patrick some years before.

"Clogher," says Ware, "seated on the Blackwater, has its name from a golden stone, where, during the time of paganism, the devil, like the oracle of Apollo, gave out deluding answers, as the register preserved in the cathedral has it." The first Bishop of Clogher, who was sainted for his virtues, died the 24th of May, 506. Although St. Patrick built the church of Down, A. D. 450, we do not find that he deputed a bishop to preside over it at this synod. The first bishop of the sees of Down and Connor was St. Cailan, who died, A. D. 518. The see of Raphoe was not founded until the days of St. Columb Kille. Kilmore is a see of comparatively recent erection. Andrew M'Brady was appointed by bull of Pope Nicholas V. its first bishop, A. D. 1453. The Bishopric of Ardagh, (the lofty hill,) in the county of Longford, he presented to his nephew St. Mela. The cathedral church was founded by St. Patrick. St. Mela died, A. D. 488. Derry was erected into an episcopal see by St. Lugene, A. D. 545, who was its first bishop. The see of Dromore, in the county of Down, owes its origin to St. Coleman, who died in 576. Dublin was not an archiepiscopal see until 1038, when Donagh, a Dane, was consecrated its first bishop. Kildare, of this see St. Coulain was the first

When he had completed these ecclesiastical arrangements, he retired to the Island, in Lough Derg, (the red lake,) in the county of Donegal, for the purpose of mortifying himself by abstinence, penance, and other ascetic privations. But in his retirement he did not entirely abstract his solicitude from the Irish church. Devotion, and the advancement of the holy faith in the enthusiasm of the people, now engrossed his whole attention. He presided at different synods in various parts of Ireland, where the most salutary canons were enacted for the security of religion and morals. To disseminate Roman literature through the country, we are told by Nennius, that he wrote, with his own hand, three hundred alphabets in the Roman character.

Prior to this period, the Irish clergy celebrated the feast of Easter, and adopted the time according to the calculation of the eastern

bishop. He died on the 3d of May, 510. St. Eden, of the royal family of Leinster, was the first bishop of Ferns: he died in January, 632. The first bishop of Leighlin, was St. Lascorian, who died in May, 603.

The late Right Rev. BISHOP DOYLE, a gentleman who, in depth of education, strength of genius, and force of eloquence, has left no living superior on the episcopal throne, and was the late Roman Catholic prelate of Kildare and Leighlin. We have before mentioned, in the text, that St. Ailbe, the contemporary of St. Patrick, was the first bishop of Cashel and Emley. The bishopric of Limerick was founded in the tenth century, by St. Munchin. Donald O'Brien, king of Munster, built the cathedral. Waterford was not a bishopric until 1094, when Malchus was the first prelate. *Lismore*, (or the great fort,) was united to the see of Waterford by a bull of Pope Urban V., A. D. 1358. St. Carthas was its first bishop: he died 14th May, 638. It was this saint who built the cathedral of Lismore. Cork became a bishopric under St. Bar, or Finbar, who flourished in the middle of the seventh century. He built the cathedral of Cork. Cloyne was united to Cork under the prelacy of Jordan, bishop of both sees, in 1430, by virtue of a bull from Pope Martin V. The cathedral of Cloyne was erected by St. Coleman, a pupil of St. Finbar, a prelate of high birth and extensive education. He died in November, 604. Ross, formerly a separate bishopric, founded by St. Fachran, "a wise and amiable man," writes Ware, in the commencement of the sixth century, is now an appendage of Cloyne and Cork. The saint built a cathedral there, the choir of which yet remains. The bishopric of Killaloe, in the county of Clare, was founded by St. Flenan, in 639. He was the son of the king of Munster. This princely prelate erected a fine cathedral here. *Ardfert*, or the summit of miracles, was made an episcopal see by Art, the son of a chieftain of Kerry. The cathedral of Ardfert was originally founded by St. Bundan, in the seventh century. Finabore, in the county of Clare, was a bishopric. Our annalists are not agreed as to who built the cathedral, which is now a pile of ruins. It was dedicated to St. Faehnan.

The Arch-bishopric of Tuam, in the county of Galway, was founded by St. Jarlath, the son of Loga O'Connor, king of Connaught. Sir James Ware, in his lives of the Irish Bishops, lauds the learning and piety of St. Jarlath. He studied in the famous school of Clonard. St. Brendan was his coadjutor bishop. It was this prelate who built the cathedral of St. Mary, in Tuam, in the year 602. In the eleventh century his remains were found entire in his tomb. Elphin, in the county of Roscommon, was established as a Bishop's see by St. Patrick. The cathedral was erected by our apostle in the middle of the fifth century. The first bishop was St. Asicus, a disciple of St. Patrick, who died, A. D. 540. Under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Elphin are seventy-nine parishes. The see of Clonfert owes its origin to St. Brendan. It was this saint erected the cathedral. He died on the 6th of May 577, and was buried under the great altar.

St Patrick founded the see of Killala, in the county of Mayo, over which he placed St. Murdach. The festival of this saint is still celebrated on the 12th of August. In our topography of the different counties in which the sees and cathedrals are situated, we shall be more circumstantial and comprehensive in our details.

churches. The Jews, we perceive by their best authenticated history, commemorated their passover on the fourteenth day of the moon, and their having put Christ to death, whilst they were celebrating the feast of the paschal lamb; which induced the Christians to fix on their Easter festival. "St. Peter and St. Paul," says an able Catholic Divine, O'Leary, "after quitting Palestine, judged that the keeping the feast of Easter on the fourteenth day of the first moon was rather adopting the Jewish, than forming a new festival; they, therefore, transferred it to the Sunday after, unless that Sunday fell on the fourteenth. But St. John, and the churches of Asia and Africa, adhered to the first institution, and the Irish bishops followed these observances until the latter years of the prelacy of St. Patrick."

What St. Patrick's opinion was, on this mere matter of discipline in the church, does not appear. "We do not," writes O'Halloran, "find any mention of it during his mission; and yet it is most certain, that the Irish did then observe the Easter celebration after the Asiatic manner. From the remarkable attachment of the Irish to this custom, we have striking proofs of the foresight and wisdom of our apostle. He probably endeavoured to reconcile the Irish clergy to the practice of the universal church; and very likely laboured, also, to make them acknowledge the supremacy of Rome. Indeed, the Irish ecclesiastics were the last to submit to the Roman calculation of Easter day.

Our apostle, in the one hundred and eighteenth year of his age, took up his abode in Saul Abbey, in the county of Down, where, after a residence of two years, devoted to prayer and piety, he died in the fifteenth year of the reign of LUGHA, 493, at the venerable and patriarchal age of one hundred and twenty-one. He was interred in the abbey of Down, which had been founded by himself. St. Bridget and St. Columba were afterwards buried in the same sepulchre, as appears from the Latin inscription on the tomb, which Cambrensis, in his topography of Ireland, tells us was quite legible in his day—

*"Hi tres duno, tumulo tumulantur, in uno,
Brigida, Patricius, atque Columba Pius.—"*

"In Down three saints one grave do fill,
Bridget, Patrick, and Columb Kille."

The saintly sepulchre of Down, in all its architectural and sculptural magnificence, its splendid shrine, adorned with the richest donations of piety, existed until Lord Deputy Grey demolished the one, and despoiled the other, in the true Gothic spirit that actuated the tasteless underlings of the tyrannic Henry VIII. and his licentious daughter, the murderous Elizabeth. But as we shall have occasion to speak of Lord Deputy Grey's administration in Ireland, in a future chapter, we will not expatiate on the subject here. We must not, however, omit to notice and reprehend the falsehoods which the national apostate, the late Dr. Ledwich, propagated respecting our national apostle. But it was with the hope of encircling his brows with a mitre that perverted the principles, and warped the Irish sympathies of Ledwich. This ambition, and the expectation

of his episcopal dignity, persuaded him to diverge from the fair course of truth, and honour, and justice, beyond the sacred precincts which reason has marked by an inviolable line of demarcation. His false assertions having passed thus irrevocably the boundaries of candour, the arguments of Malone, M'Dermott, and the erudite Dr. Milner, have affixed the mark of baseness upon them; and they now necessarily stand exposed and self-convicted by their own incautious temerity. The verity of our annals has been strengthened by these writers, who have sustained them by new buttresses of logical deduction, so that they must now oppose an adamantine panoply against the futile mendacity of such recreants as Ledwich.

There is not in our Christian records any fact better substantiated than the existence of St. Patrick; and we might assert, with a perfect regard to truth, that there is no saint on the calendar whose life has been written by so many hands, as well natives as foreigners. It is loudly proclaimed by the universal tradition of the country; by the very names of the churches which he built, the numerous sites of his pious erections;—all might have convinced any one, except the coadjutors of Macpherson, of the identity and real existence of our patron saint. But why should we wonder at any fool-hardy assertion of Ledwich, who wrote with all his might to subvert the credit of the entire body of our history, and to prove to Europe that our records were bottomed on the quagmire of poetic fiction?

Dr. Ledwich opens the campaign of his national infidelity by observing—"The existence of this saint," says he, "and his conversion of the Irish, are points not only firmly believed by the Irish, but referred to, as undeniable historic facts, by every writer who has treated of the civil and ecclesiastical history of the country. But about the year 1618, Dr. Ryves one of the masters in chancery in Dublin, and judge of the faculties, and prerogative court, to answer a calumnious and inflammatory libel, was obliged to consider minutely the history of the established church."

From the tenor of this delusive and deceiving passage, with which he endeavoured to throw a veil of fiction over the fact of our saint's existence, the impression might gain an ascendancy in shallow minds that the apostle of Ireland was only an imaginary personage. For who can read the passage, without being led to suppose that Dr. Ryves, a prejudiced Englishman, totally unacquainted with our language, discovered from being obliged to consider *minutely* the history of the established church, (Seldon's, we presume,) that our saint was only the creature of fancy; yet no such thing appears. He, it is true, has his doubts, like the inglorious and unnational Ledwich, but he could not prove them well founded.

The authority of Ryves, however, rather militated against the Utopian system of Dr. Ledwich, and it is only surprising that so cunning, sophistical, and plausible a disputant as Ledwich should have introduced it.

We shall, however, without treading in the footsteps of Dr. Milner, follow Dr. Ledwich in his history of Dr. Ryves's silly doubts relative to the existence of St. Patrick. "Doubts," says this unfilial son of Erin, "arose in his mind as to the reality of our apostle, and

of the age in which he is supposed to have flourished." However, before Dr. Ryves had seriously applied to an investigation of these matters, he thought it proper and becoming to consult Camden and Usher,* the two great luminaries of British and Irish antiquities. To the latter he opens his objections;—and first he observes, the wonderful miracles recorded of St. Patrick were neither common nor believed in the age in which he lived; and this he proves from St. Augustin, who was contemporary with our apostle. Secondly, he argues from the silence of Platinus, who, though in his life of Pope Celestine mentions the sending of St. Germanus into England, and Palladius into Scotland, takes no notice of his appointing Patrick to Ireland, and therefore concludes he must have lived later than was generally supposed. Unacquainted with Camden, yet desirous of his opinion, Ryves prevailed on Usher to lay his letter before him, which he did. *Usher seems not to have acted friendly, impartially, or candidly on this occasion*; for, in his letter to Camden, enclosing that of Ryves's, he endeavours to prepossess him in favour of St. Patrick, and even to point out what answer he should give. He, indeed, remarks, that "the ridiculous miracles fastened upon our saint were the work of later writers;" and in this Camden agrees. Dr. Ryves, thus discountenanced by the oracular decisions of these eminent men, and overborne solely by authority, no further pursued this curious subject, a few hints excepted, although his learning enabled him to bring it to a fair conclusion. On what weak, but specious, grounds of logic has the humble squire of Macpherson built up his system of historical imposition!

Such is Dr. Ledwich's history of a transaction which served, instead of contributing to his purposes, materially to strengthen the authority of our annalists, and to impress the relations of St. Patrick with the seal of veritable fact. If ever a man used arguments to defeat, nullify, and depreciate a fanciful theory, and impede its progress in general opinion, that man was the late Dr. Ledwich. His reasoning and deductions are lame and impotent in the extreme; and were brought, as a dernier reserve, into action by the unpatriotic writer, to prop up his visionary hypothesis. What stronger proof, we would ask, could Dr. Ledwich have brought forward, if he wished to remove any doubts that might have been entertained of our saint's existence, than to represent an old, casuistical, incredulous lawyer, doubting of it, and in order to satisfy his doubts, applying to the "*two greatest luminaries of British and Irish antiquities*"—Camden and Usher, who both unceremoniously confirmed the existence of the apostle of Ireland. "But," says the learned Doctor, "Usher seems not to have acted friendly, impartially, or candidly, on this occasion; for, in his letter to Camden, he endeavours to prepossess him in favour of St. Patrick." The impartial and intelligent

* Archbishop Usher, whose fame shines as a primary luminary in our history and her literature, and whom Dr. Johnson declared the most learned man in Europe in his age, was born in Dublin, in the year 1580. He received his education in Trinity College, Dublin, where he distinguished himself by his extensive erudition and classical eloquence. In 1621 he was consecrated Bishop of Meath. At the special request of James I. he was translated, in 1624, to the archiepiscopal see of Armagh. He died in 1655.

reader must immediately perceive that this is a most unwarrantable and flagrant attack upon the honour and reputation of the immortal Bishop Usher. That erudite, profound, and virtuous prelate has been accused by an unprincipled defamer of his native land, of partiality and want of candour, because, forsooth, in his letter to Camden, he offers any opinion on a subject with which he was so peculiarly and intimately acquainted. If we were to confirm Dr. Ledwich's conclusions, we should admit that candour and impartiality consist in being silent, in regard to truth, and that those qualities, which moral philosophers have taught us to revere as virtues, were but the mere negatives of his ludicrous system of new-fangled ethics. But more of this in the next chapter; for we feel it a duty incumbent on us to prove that Ledwich's history of Ireland is a base libel on our country.

CHAPTER XLII.

The objections of Dr. Ledwich against the existence of St. Patrick answered.

BISHOP USHER, in his letter to Camden, gave expression to his honest conviction; for Dr. Ledwich, captious as he certainly was, had not the effrontery even to insinuate that the primate thought contrary to what he considerably affirmed in his deliberate communication to the British antiquary; and, indeed, there is little reason to suppose, that a protestant bishop of the privy council of king James I. would labour to prove the existence of a Catholic saint, if he had believed him an ideal personage.

Dr. Ledwich endeavoured to impress his readers with the opinion that Usher and Camden deviated strangely from strict veracity in their concurrence in the supposition, that the ridiculous miracles fastened upon our saint were the work of later writers; "for," said he, in "the Roman martyrology, Erric of Auxerre, Nennius, and others, never omit St. Patrick's miracles when they name him. They are both coeval and from the same mint. Nor would an argument so open to confutation ever have been brought forward, was a better to be found." What shallow logic, and futile conclusions! For do we not know that every argument was open to confutation, when attacked by the sophistical weapons of Dr. Ledwich. We can, indeed, confute any argument, if we are permitted to add or detract from the sense of the author, because it is not then his argument, but a sophistical metamorphosis, brought to aid our own purpose. Such was Dr. Ledwich's mode of confuting arguments in his crusade against our annalists. He maintained that arguments might be culled out like flowers from a parterre, *ad libitum*; and so indeed they might, if they were merely intended to adorn and diversify the walks of literature, instead of being employed on a grave subject which required lucid illustration, and the removal of the darkness

and obscurity that intercepted the meridian light of historical knowledge and antiquarian research. But Dr. Ledwich, though a good scholar, did not reason in the strong syllogistical logic of Locke; for when in a false position, or a dilemma of reason, he mounts his noisy chariot, and, like old Salmoneus, who affected the god comes thundering over his brazen bridge, overpowering his antagonists and readers at least by sound, if not by argument.

He tells us, in his history, that Dr. Ryves "*was overborne solely by authority*;" a tribunal from whose decisions he appeals to the high court of his own fanciful hypothesis, and here he offers in his pleading the omnipotent opinion of his friend Macpherson, which asserted that "the *authority* of a thousand learned men is not equal to one solid argument!" But what are arguments if not founded on authority? for without the evidence of authority we cannot reason on asserted facts, because we can have no pretence whatever to argue either for or against the truth of any thing recorded in the historic page. Authority, it is true, can have no weight in metaphysical and philosophical inquiries, but so far as it is found to coincide with reason and observation. The book of nature is open to all men, it is the same in all ages; and he who can recognize the truths emblazoned on its pages, imbibes information at the fountain head of rational philosophy.

We do not believe a proposition in physics, geometry, or ethics, because a certain celebrated philosopher, or mathematician, has asserted it to be true; but because we find it to quadrate with the deductions of reason, which are eternal and unchangeable. We know that the truths of these propositions do not change with times, and that if they were true in the times of Pythagoras, Socrates, or Euclid, they must be so at the present time. Here then authority can never decide, though the precepts of others may guide us to those principles that enable us to judge for ourselves. But who will say that the knowledge of history is collected in the same manner? Who, we ask, will affirm that we have the same means of ascertaining, at present, that the land of Egypt was afflicted by ten plagues, in the time of Pharaoh, as Moses and Aaron had, who were actual witnesses of the scene and occurrences; or that we could know any thing of this extraordinary visitation, if it had not been recorded by Moses? Authority, then, is the sole arbiter of historical knowledge; and he who, like Dr. Ryves, is *overborne* by authority; he who sets up his own visionary conjectures on the tripod of imagination, to overawe and frown down its testimony, must be either blinded by folly, or infatuated by incorrigible bigotry and refractory prejudice. Dr. Ledwich was driven on by these passions beyond the pale of his better reason and judgment, when he exultingly asserted, that though Dr. Ryves was overborne by authority, "*his learning* enabled him to bring it to a fair *conclusion*," that is, that St. Patrick never existed! Learning, then, was, in the doctor's opinion, superior to authority in historical researches, and yet if he were now living, we would ask him, what is learning as it applies to historical narration? and he could not help answering, that it is a knowledge of such facts and persons as are communicated to us, and verified by the author-

ity of historical writers. But why has not Dr. Ledwich told us how his learning enabled Dr. Ryves to conclude that St. Patrick never existed?

Surely this strange conclusion was not deduced from learning founded on authority, for we must not forget that he "*was overborne by it.*"

But if Dr. Ryves convinced himself, without any credible evidence of authority, that St. Patrick never existed, this species of groundless and unreasonable proselytism, though considered by himself and his friend Ledwich very satisfactory, was doubted and decried by the learned;—and because Usher and Camden resolutely opposed the absurd heresy of the new fangled theories, Ledwich fulminated a bitter anathema of wrath against their memories.

We are to remember, however, that the greatest fanatic, or the wildest enthusiast, is quite pleased with his own chimerical conclusions, no matter how improbable and romantic, or how repugnant they may be to common sense and inquiring reason.

Dr. Milner, to whose powerful writings on the present subject we must acknowledge ourself much indebted for many of the authorities that confirm the existence of our apostle, fully exposes the sophistry and artifice of the arguments of Dr. Ledwich, regarding the errors that have crept into the calendars and martyrologies of the Roman Catholic church. To these errors, Dr. Ledwich alludes in the most exulting manner, and adduces them as grounds from which he deduced his conclusion, that St. Patrick was an ideal saint. But from this vantage ground, which he thought impregnable, the arguments of Dr. Milner soon compelled the champion of Macpherson to retreat.

"These errors," says the profound and erudite divine, "have been detected, not by protestant, but by catholic hagiographers; by Bollandus, and Baillet, and Butler, and Launoi, and Fleury. In the books mentioned by Dr. Ledwich, in particular, the errors denounced by him have been accurately corrected. Indeed in one of those liturgical books, St. Denis of Paris was confounded with St. Denis the Areopagite. In the next place, if it were reasonable to reject all ancient histories and records in which an error had been detected, we might throw the whole collection of them into the fire; for which of them is entirely faultless? After all, the errors now in question are not, generally speaking, those of the hagiographers, but of the present critic. He (Dr. Ledwich) pretends, indeed, that those eminent Catholic writers, Bollandus, Papebroch, Launoi, and Tillemont, rejected and spoke contemptuously of "the deified phantoms," as he calls the saints in general. But what person of learning is not indignant at this deception, it being notorious that those profound scholars spent the greater part of their lives in recording the histories, and illustrating the virtues of those very saints? In writing their works, the martyrologies were avowedly their first authority; next to which were the most genuine acts of the saints they could procure. But what more particularly regards the present purpose is, we know that those learned scholars and enlightened critics have one and all acknowledged the existence in general of

Ireland's apostle, St. Patrick, and the authenticity in particular of the account which he gives of himself, in his celebrated "Confession." Dr. Ledwich, having discharged these random shafts at our saint, comes now armed in the invulnerable panoply of irrefutable evidence, to consign him at once to the chartless regions of ideal existence.

"I shall now," says the arch-apostate, "proceed with stronger evidence, to prove that our apostle was an imaginary personage. If he received his mission from Pope Celestine, his orders, in the Church of Rome, were graced with the archiepiscopal dignity, formed an hierarchy, and established rights and ceremonies from Roman originals, as Colgan, Jocelyn, and all his biographers boast. Can the utmost stretch of human ingenuity assign a reason why Cogitosus, Adamnan, Cumman, and Bede have passed over, without notice these interesting particulars? Bede, whose predilections for Rome and her tenets, has led him into many errors, and whom all allow to have been well informed, never would have omitted so capital an event as the conversion of Ireland by a holy missionary from Rome, and the miracles of that missionary, in support of his favorite doctrines, did such facts, or any tradition of them, exist in the beginning of the eighth century."

Here the utmost stretch of human ingenuity is challenged to assign a reason why Cogitosus, Bede, and others passed over the conversion of Ireland by St. Patrick, unnoticed, if such a fact or any tradition of it existed in their time. The doctor probably thought to terrify the advocates of St. Patrick by this bold challenge, from attempting a task which he describes as insurmountable. But if St. Patrick did really exist and convert Ireland in the fourth century, Dr. Ledwich should have allowed that the fact was too well known and credited in the commencement of the eighth century, so as to render it unnecessary for these eminent ecclesiastical writers to say any thing in support of what was universally believed, and established on the most tenable grounds of historical evidence. Why should they come forward, and impose upon themselves the useless task of bearing testimony to the existence of a great and eminent apostle whom no one had denied? But we are told that Bede would have been glad to record so "capital an event." If Bede had lived in Protestant times, and in a Protestant country, he might probably have been anxious to signalize the conversion of Ireland to catholicity, in his ecclesiastical history.

We shall willingly admit to the followers of Dr. Ledwich, that the venerable Bede was zealously attached to the Roman see; but we must deny that this attachment would have been a reason why, in his ecclesiastical history of England, he should deem it necessary, for the honour of that see, to speak of St. Patrick. The celebrated English historian was not giving his readers an account of the affairs of the Irish church, nor of its conversion to Christianity, and, therefore, as Dr. Milner properly observes, "had no greater reason to speak of St. Patrick than of St. *Regimius*, the apostle of the French." But does not Dr. Ledwich himself acknowledge, in his antiquities, that Bede makes an honorable mention of St. Patrick in his Martyrology?

What greater, or more convincing testimony could the doctor require to prove the existence of the Irish apostle than this? But it is tiresome and profitless to pursue Dr. Ledwich much farther through the traceless wilds of his theory—through a futile, though dogmatical, a specious, though glaringly sophistical and inconclusive train of negative arguments, plausibly suited, no doubt, to vulgar apprehension, which, were they even ingeniously and logically connected, could still prove nothing, inasmuch as negative arguments can afford no positive evidence, no positive proof, no positive historic elucidation; and the reader conversant with Ledwich's antiquities will observe that all his arguments against the real existence of St. Patrick are mere hypothetical phantoms, that vanish from the light of inquiry into their congenial sepulchres of sophistry. No one argument occurs in which the mind could fortify itself with the orthodoxy of reason, no strong hold for logical inquiry to make a stand against the assaults of disputation. In fine, there is nothing tangible that can be grasped—nothing, verily, that is marked with the distinctive features, and glowing with the pulsations of life, spirit, or reality. No such characteristic belongs to the controversial or polemical writings of the late Rev. Dr. Ledwich. His arguments were too refined, too subtle and ethereal, to endure the grosser bonds of material encumbrance; nay, they cannot even find a resting place in the remotest prospect of intellectual vision; yet with all their negative nihility, they were pompously and dogmatically brought forward to prove, that Bishop Usher, General Vallancey, the Rev. Mr. Whitaker, Mr. Charles O'Connor, Dr. Keating, as well as Fleury, Mosheim, Tillemont, Cane, Nicholson, Harris, Ware, Hutchinson, Camden, Shellman, Bollandus, Bellermin, Godwin, Parker, Bale, Colgan, St. Bernard, Prosper, Probus, Bede, Nennius, and a host of other able writers, were all the disciples of falsehood, who wished to impose upon posterity, by labouring to make them believe that a certain man named Patrick, who never existed but in their own minds, converted Ireland to Christianity! The doctor, not content with all the invisible arrows which he shot at the memory of our apostle, like an evil-disseminating necromancer, kept his watchful ærial sylphs, down to the period of his death, hovering on the wing of inquisitive privation, in order to discover a new train of phantasms, or negative arguments, by which he might triumph over all the positive testimony of antiquity. But his pertinacious cavils and futile objections have been so ably and conclusively overthrown and refuted by Dr. Milner, that it is almost unnecessary for us to dilate much farther on this subject. We shall therefore bring our narrative of St. Patrick towards a conclusion, by quoting the following passage from Dr. Milner's observations on the historical heresy of Dr. Ledwich:

“Dr. Ledwich, the bold invader of historical truth, has elsewhere endeavoured to prop up his system of mingled scepticism and irreligion with the following chimerical assumption: ‘The Christian missionaries found it indispensably necessary to procure some saint, under whose protection the inhabitants might live secure from temporal and spiritual evils. At a loss for a patron, they adopted a

practice derived from Druidical paganism, and pursued it to a great extent in the corrupt ages of Christianity. Thus of a mountain at Glendaloch, a saint was made, as of the Shannon, St. Senanus; and of Down St. Dunus.' When our reverend sceptic first sported this ridicule on the great and good men, to whom he is indebted for his civilization, and for whatever he possesses of Christianity, the truly learned and judicious Charles O'Connor was living, who did not fail to call him to a proper account for his irreligious impositions. This celebrated antiquary challenged him to prove a single instance of such pagan metamorphosis in the ecclesiastical history of Ireland; and descending to the particulars mentioned by Dr. Ledwich, he clearly showed that the Shannon or Senus, was so called many ages before the Christian saint, called Senanus, was born; and with respect to the pretended St. Dunus, he denied that the name of any such saint was to be met with, except amongst the fabrications of the *veritable* doctor. But after the innumerable authorities, some of them the contemporaries of the holy man, that have attested the existence and mission of St. Patrick, it were as reasonable to question the existence of all personages deceased, concerning whom we have no contemporary, or other authentic records, composed within three or four centuries from that in which they lived, for then we might deny there ever were such men as Romulus, Cyrus, Abraham, or Adam himself." Dr. Milner has indeed annihilated the theories of Ledwich,—he has finally set them to rest in as decisive and powerful a refutation as ever overwhelmed an insulting, arrogant, and unfair adversary. For Dr. Ledwich was a dogmatic and insolent disputant, who never brought the generosity of literary chivalry with him into the lists of controversy. He had, we allow, a strong vein for rude irony and frowning contempt; as he generally mocked the argument which he could not subvert, and ridiculed the virtue which he could not emulate. He not only assailed the living, but calumniated the dead; for he has not spared the sacredness of the grave, nor given quarter to the most illustrious shades of our Milesian progenitors, whose spirits still live, and shall live, in the historic remembrance of their virtues. His motive and aim were to despoil their tombs of the trophies with which ages adorned them, to blot out the records of their exploits from the escutcheons of immortality, and to tarnish the lustre which he could not reflect back upon them.

"The see of Armagh," writes MOORE, "being now established, and the great bulk of the nation won over to the faith, St. Patrick, resting in the midst of the spiritual creation he had called up round him, passed the remainder of his days between Armagh and his favourite retreat, at Sabhul, in the barony of Lecale,—that spot which had witnessed the first dawn of his apostolical career, and now shared in the calm glories which surrounded its setting. Among the many obvious fables with which even the best of the ancient records of his life abound, is to be reckoned the account of his journey to Rome, after the foundation of Armagh, with the view of obtaining, as is alleged, from the pope, a confirmation of its metropolitical privileges, and also of procuring a supply of relics. This

story, invented, it is plain, to dignify and lend a lustre to some relics shown in later times at Armagh, is wholly at variance with the Saint's written testimony, which proves him constantly to have remained in Ireland, from the time when he commenced his mission in the barony of Lecale, to the last day of his life. In the document here referred to, which was written after the foundation of Armagh, he declares expressly that the Lord "had commanded him to come among the Irish, and to stay with them for the remainder of his life."

"Among the last proceedings recorded of him, he is said to have held some synods at Armagh, in which canons were decreed, and ecclesiastical matters regulated. Of the canons attributed to these early Synods, there are some pronounced to be of a much later date, while of others the authenticity has been, by high and critical authority, admitted.*

"The impression that his death was not far distant, appears to have been strong on the Saint's mind when he wrote his Confession, the chief object of which was, to inform his relatives, and others in foreign nations, of the redeeming change which God, through his ministry, had worked in the minds of the Irish. With this view it was that he wrote his parting communication in Latin, though fully aware, as he himself acknowledges, how rude and imperfect was his mode of expressing himself in that tongue, from the constant habit he had been in, for so many years, of speaking no language but Irish.

"In his retreat at Sabhul, (A. D. 465,) the venerable Saint was seized with his last illness. Perceiving that death was near at hand, and wishing that Armagh, as the seat of his own peculiar see, should be the resting-place of his remains, he set out to reach that spot; but feeling, on his way, some inward warnings, which the fancy of tradition has converted into the voice of an angel, commanding him to return to Sabhul, as the place appointed for his last hour, he went back to that retreat, and there, about a week after, died, on the 17th of March, A. D. 465, having then reached, according to the most consistent hypothesis on the subject, his seventy-eighth year. No sooner had the news spread throughout Ireland that the great apostle was no more, than the clergy flocked from all quarters to Sabhul, to assist in solemnizing his obsequies; and as every bishop, or priest, according as he arrived, felt naturally anxious to join in honouring the dead by the celebration of the holy mysteries, the rites were continued without interruption through day and night. To psalmody and the chanting of hymns the hours of the night were all devoted; and so great was the pomp, and the profusion of torches kept constantly burning, that, as those who describe the scene express it, darkness was dispelled, and the whole time appeared to be one constant day.

* Several of these canons appear to have been drawn up at a time when Paganism was not yet extinct in Ireland. Thus, among the canons of the synod of Patrick, Auxilius, and Esserninus, the eighth begins thus,—"*Clericus si pro gentili in Ecclesiam recipi non licet;*" and in the fourteenth, "*Christianus qui . . . more Gentilium ad aruspiciem meaverit.*"

"In the choice of a successor to the see there could be no delay nor difficulty, as the eyes of the saint himself, and of all who were interested in the appointment, had long been fixed on his disciple Benignus, as the person destined to succeed him. It was remembered that he had, in speaking of this disciple when but a boy, said, in the language rather of prophecy than of appointment, "He will be the heir of my power." Some writers even assert, that the see was resigned by him to Benignus soon after the foundation of Armagh. But there appear little grounds for this assertion, and, according to the most consistent accounts, Benignus did not become bishop of Armagh till after St. Patrick's death.

"Besides the natives of Ireland contemporary with our Saint, of whom, in this sketch of his life, some notice has been taken, there were also other distinguished Irishmen, of the same period, whom it would not be right to pass over in silence. Among the names, next to that of the apostle himself, illustrious, are those of Ailbe, "another Patrick," as he was fondly styled, the pious Declan, and Ibar; all disciples of St. Patrick, and all memorable, as primitive fathers of the Irish church. To Secundinus, the first bishop,* as it is said, who died in Ireland, (A. D. 448,) is attributed a Latin poem or hymn in honour of St. Patrick, in which the Saint is mentioned as still alive, and of whose authenticity some able critics have seen no reason whatever to doubt.† There is also another hymn, upon the same subject, in the Irish language, said to have been written by Fiech, the disciple of the poet Dubdacht, but which, though very ancient, is evidently the production of a somewhat later period.

"While these pious persons were, in ways much more effective than by the composition of such dry, metrical legends, advancing the Christian cause in Ireland, a far loftier flight of sacred song was, at the same time, adventured by an Irish writer abroad, the poet Shiel, or (as his name is Latinised) Sedulius,‡ who flourished

* This bishop was sent, in the year 439, together with two others, to aid St. Patrick in his mission; as we find thus recorded in the Annals of Inisfallen:—"Secundinus et Auxiliarius (Auxilius,) et Esserninus mittuntur in auxilium Patricii, nec tamen tenuerunt apostolatam, nisi Patricius solus."

† "I find no reason," says Dr. Lanigan, "for not considering it a genuine work of Secundinus."

The strophes of this hymn, consisting each of four lines, begin with the letters of the alphabet; the first strophe commencing, "Audite omnes amantes Deum;" and the last, "Zona Domini præcinctus."

‡ There has been some controversy respecting our claims to this poet, who, it is alleged, has been confounded with another writer, of the same name, in the ninth century, universally admitted to have been an Irishman. The reader will find the question sifted, with his usual industry, by Bayle (art. Sedulius.) Among the numerous authorities cited by Usher, in favour of our claim to this poet, the title prefixed to a work generally attributed to him (Annotations on Paul's Epistles,) would seem decisive of the question:—"Sedulii Scoti Hyberniensis in omnes Epistolas Pauli Collectaneum." The name, Sedulius, too, written in Irish Siedhuil, and said to be the same as Shiel, is one peculiar, we are told, to Ireland, no instance of its use being found in any other country. By English scholars, it will, I fear, be thought another strong Irish characteristic of this poet, that he sometimes erred in prosody. "Dictio Sedulii," says Borrichius, "facilis, ingeniosa, numerosa, perspicua, sic satis munda—si excipias prosodica quædam delicta."—*Dissertation de poet.*

In praising the Paschale Opus of Sedulius, pope Gelasius had described it as

in this century,* and, among other writings of acknowledged merit, was the author of a spirited Iambic poem upon the life of Christ, from which the Catholic church has selected some of her most beautiful hymns.†

CHAPTER XLIII.

Accession of Laoghaire.—He attempts to enforce the Leinster tribute, is defeated in battle and taken prisoner.—His reign and death.—Laoghaire, the son of Nial the Great, as related in a former chapter, succeeded to the throne after the demise of his brave uncle, Dathy.

Our historians have fixed the epoch of Laoghaire's accession in the year 428, of the Christian era. He acquired great experience in war; in the campaigns of his father Nial and his uncle Dathy, and on several great occasions he displayed the most signal feats of intrepidity and courage. To a prince like him, whose darling passion was ambition, and whose desire was to shine in martial renown, the calm of peace was disagreeable. His daring spirit could not languish in the luxuries of a court, nor repose in the sunshine of an inactive reign. War was the native element of his soul, it was the object that attracted his inclinations. An ambitious monarch like him, with a great standing army, could not long want a pretext for commencing hostilities on a neighbouring state. The Britons having refused to pay the tribute to which his father Nial made them subject, he resolved, in consequence, to exact it by the force of the sword.

In conjunction with his allies, the Picts, he made an incursion into Britain, defeated such of the inhabitants as appeared in arms, wasted the country, and compelled the people not only to pay him the contributions which he originally demanded, but to deliver up to him hostages for the faithful performance of the conditions of the

written "heroicis versibus;" but, by an unlucky clerical error, the word "hereticis" was, in the course of time, substituted for "heroicis," which brought our Irish poet into much disgrace at Rome, and led some canonists, it is said, to the wise decision, "*Omnia poemata esse heretica.*"

* Not content with the honour of contributing, thus early, so great an ornament to foreign literature, some of our writers have represented Sedulius as producing his poems in Ireland; and referred to his classical knowledge as evidence of the state of literature in that country. Thus O'Halloran:—"That poetry was passionately cultivated in our schools, and classical poetry too, I have but to refer to the writings of the famous Sedulius."—Vol. iii. chap. 7. Even Mr. D'Alton has allowed himself to be tempted by his zeal for Ireland into an encouragement of the same delusion. "The treasures of Roman lore," he says, "were profitably spread over the country: the writings of Sedulius testify that classic poetry was cultivated at a very early period in Ireland."

† The Paschale Opus of Sedulius is in heroic metre, and extended through five books. His Iambic Hymn, which has been unaccountably omitted by Usher, in his Sylloge, commences thus,—

"A solis ortus cardine,
Ad usque terræ limitem."

peace which he granted to them. Rapin, it will be observed by the intelligent reader, alludes to this invasion of Britain by the Irish, in his history.

Returning home enriched with spoils and flushed with victory, his restless spirit could find no repose under the olive of peace. His army being now brave, numerous, and disciplined, he imagined that he could easily force the king of Leinster to pay the tribute which so many of his predecessors attempted to exact.

Criomthan Kinsellagh, the son of Eana, who so gallantly opposed the grandfather of this monarch, Eochaidh, was now king of Leinster. This prince indignantly refused to pay the required impost. The refusal, of course, was deemed by Laoghaire as tantamount to a declaration of war. Criomthan saw the storm gathering around him without dismay, and made every preparation to brave the shock of its explosion. At his call the people of Leinster flew to arms, and arrayed themselves under the banner of their king. Criomthan, by policy and address, persuaded Nafraoich and Luigh, kings of north and south Munster, to become his allies. Strengthened by this confederacy, he began to entertain sanguine hopes of success in the approaching war. But before the allies had reached Kilkenny, the monarch carried fire and sword to the town of Wexford, and succeeded in capturing the palace of Ferns, in which he found a great quantity of treasure. Criomthan, on his approach, retreated to a strong post in the county of Kilkenny, where he determined to await the arrival of his allies. Laoghaire, wishing to give some repose to his troops, after their long march, established his headquarters in Wexford. As soon as the Munster forces had joined the king of Leinster, he, with his combined army, marched towards the camp of the monarch. Laoghaire not considering Wexford a favourable battle-ground, retreated to *Atha-Dara*, an extensive plain, near Monastereven, in the county of Kildare. Here both parties mutually agreed to decide their differences by the fate of a battle.

The conflict, as usual, was desperately disputed, and feats of heroism and genius were displayed on both sides of the highest character; but after a prolonged struggle as fierce as it was brave, the monarch was overpowered by the allied troops, and taken prisoner; nor could he purchase his freedom but on condition of discharging the Lagenians* from all future tribute and vassalage.

To these conditions he was reluctantly obliged to submit, and to take a solemn oath that he would fulfil their obligations.

But oaths have seldom restrained regal power: kings, in all ages, have disregarded their sacred obligations, and only adhered to them

* The inhabitants of Leinster were called *Lagenians* from the Irish name of Leinster, *Lainseach*, which is derived from *Labhra Laoínseach*, who was monarch of Ireland, A. M. 3685. He, during the usurpation of his uncle *Cobhthach*, resided in France, the king of that country being his uncle, who entrusted him with the chief command of his army. "He," says O'Halloran, "first introduced into Ireland the use of the *Laighean*, or Gaulish spear, and he set many foundries at work in Wexford for the fabrication of these instruments of war; hence, ever after, Leinster was distinguished by the rest of the nation by the name of *Coige Laighean*, or the province of spears." For a more particular account of the derivative of Leinster, we beg to refer the reader to the XVI. chapter of our history of Ireland.

while their power was too feeble to violate them. Laoghaire, therefore, as soon as he recovered his liberty, protested against the treatment he had received; alleged that his oath was compulsory, and, in consequence, refused to submit to the restrictions which it had imposed upon him. Accordingly, as soon as he returned to Tara, he began, with the most spirited activity, to recruit his army. Criomthan, on the other hand, was not idle. He filled up all the chasms made in his ranks during the last war, and did every thing that could conciliate the friendship and good opinion of the princes of Munster. To reward *Luigh Dealboid*, the king of north Munster and general of the *Dalgais*, he gave him a grant of a large tract of land in Meath, which was possessed by his posterity, the *Dealbhnas* and O'Finnallads, until the twelfth century, when they were despoiled of it by Hugo De Lacy, who made a grant of it to Gilbert De Nugent, the ancestor of the present earl of West Meath.* Laoghaire,

* Hugo De Lacy held the highest place in the confidence and regard of Henry II. Prior to the king's departure from Ireland, in 1173, he made De Lacy a grant of the entire county of Meath, and promoted him to the high office of Governor of Dublin. The better to secure his possessions, De Lacy contrived to win the affections of the Princess Rosa O'Connor, the daughter of King Roderick, and to espouse her. This union gave him a strong hold in the popularity of the Irish, who revered their Milesian princesses with romantic enthusiasm. The just and impartial government of De Lacy in Ireland, as well as the popularity that he acquired by his marriage with an Irish princess, exposed him to the envy and malice of his countrymen, who excited the jealousy and fears of Henry so much, that he recalled him to England. But the moment he came before Henry, he vindicated his conduct with such a force of eloquence, that he reinstated him in all his dignities, and invested him with full powers to act as his lord deputy in Ireland. After resuming his government, he built several forts in his principality of Meath, to defend it from the attacks of the Irish chieftains, the O'Riellys and O'Rourkes. In his progress of erecting these forts, he determined to demolish the old abbey of Dorrowe, near Kells, which was founded by St. Columb Kille. All the Irish workmen, shocked at his impiety in profaning, by such sacrilege, an edifice consecrated and built by their royal saint, indignantly refused to demolish the abbey. De Lacy, irritated by this refusal, began to use harsh expressions to the workmen; whereupon one of them snatched a battle-axe "and," says Leland, "with one vigorous blow smote off his head." This occurred in August, 1186. Prior to the death of De Lacy, he gave to Sir Gilbert De Nugent, as a marriage portion with his sister Margaret, an assignment of the lordships of Delvin *More* (great) and Delvenbeg (little) in the county of Meath, which his descendants possess until this day.

Henry ennobled De Nugent by the title of baron of Delvin. His descendant, Richard Nugent, eighth baron of Delvin, was elevated to the office of lord deputy of Ireland, by Henry VIII. in 1528. But he did not enjoy his "palmy state" long; for in an incursion which he made into the country of O'Connor, the king's county, he was captured and imprisoned by that gallant chieftain. Richard, the tenth baron, was imprisoned by James I. on the charge of being concerned in the *imaginary* conspiracy of the O'Niels, O'Donnells, O'Doughertys, Maguires, and M'Mahons, in 1607. But after effecting his escape from the castle of Dublin, he fled to England, procured an audience of the king, and succeeded in ingratiating himself so much in the good graces of the monarch, that he created him Earl of West Meath. His grandson, Richard, the second earl, fought gallantly against Cromwell; in consequence of which, that execrable tyrant caused an act of parliament to be passed for confiscating his properties, and exempting him from pardon for life. But on the restoration of Charles II. in 1661, he recovered his dignities and estates.

To trace down the genealogy of the Nugent family since that period is unnecessary, as the reader will find a relation of their marriages and deaths in the *Irish peerage*.

now overran as a conqueror Leinster with a mighty army, and compelled Criomthan to pay him the tribute which he demanded. This conquest enriched the exchequer of the monarch, and enabled him to prepare another expedition for Britain, on a most extensive scale.

At this juncture, 436, the Britons, hearing of the designs of the Irish monarch on their country, elected a military chieftain (VORTIGERN) as their king. He levied an army, with which he marched to north Britain, to oppose the Irish king, and his allies, the Picts. But in a battle which took place at Carlisle, Vortigern was totally defeated. The disastrous result of the engagement completely humbled the Britons, and obliged them to solicit the aid of the Saxons. In their consternation and dismay, they retreated to the borders of Wales, whence the victorious Irish monarch pursued them. The arrival of the Saxons, however, revived their spirits, and the united armies made head against the Irish invaders with success; and Britain, through the assistance of her new auxiliaries gained a temporary relief from the distresses of war. But the Britons were unworthy of possessing a land which they had not the spirit to defend; and the extremities to which they were reduced by their Saxon allies, as we learn from English history, were much more severe than all they had hitherto endured from the Irish and Picts. Laoghaire, however, by a superior force, was necessitated to retreat to Caledonia. Here he occupied an advantageous position, in the mountains, where he intended to defend himself until he could procure reinforcements from Ireland. Several months elapsed before the succours from his kingdom had arrived. While the king was impatient for the assistance of his new levies, he was in the habit, on every serene evening, of setting himself on the summit of a mountain overlooking the sea, to gaze on the far-extended ocean, and to strain his longing eyes, endeavouring to discern the approach of his fleet in the distant perspective.

But as his eyes were at length blessed with a view of the long expected armament, he was killed by lightning, in the thirtieth year of his reign. "It is indeed," says M'DERMOTT, "somewhat singular, that he and his predecessor should both meet their fate from this dangerous element, and that both should be ascribed to similar causes. Dathy's to that of having violated the cell of a hermit; and Laoghaire's, to the violation of the treaty he had made with the Lagenians, and which he consecrated with an oath." The contemporaries of Laoghaire were Criomthan Kinsellagh, king of Leinster, Muireadhach O'Niel, king of Ulster, Dungabach O'Connor, king of Connaught, and Angus M'Carthy, king of *Leath Moga*, or Munster. The character of Laoghaire, was a compound of vice and virtues. His ambition stifled the voice of justice in his mind; all the noblest qualities of his heart were diverted from the channel in which nature had designed them to flow, by the power which that passion exercised over his best feelings.

We must here observe, that our annalists have given us but scanty details of this reign, which was so distinguished by conquest and martial exploits. The cause, we think, may be attributed to the engrossing attraction of the complete change and reformation in the

religion of the country. We may naturally conclude, that the introduction of Christianity interfered with that public attention which had hitherto been paid to the national records. The propagation of the gospel employed, at this epoch, the zeal, as well as the talent of the learned; and experience informs us, that in all sudden changes and revolutions, while the public attention is directed to one great national object, either through the interest which it creates, or the passion for novelty that it nourishes, matters of minor consideration, are deemed unworthy of assiduous regard. But, as in the physical world, when the laws of nature are interrupted by a partial suspension of their operations, we have reason to apprehend some violent reaction, or explosion, to restore the equilibrium; so, in the moral world, partial evils must be endured before universal good can be acquired.

CHAPTER XLIV.

The state of the Scots in Britain and the progress of Catholicity in Ireland from the fifth to the sixth century.

MR. MOORE, in his history, presents the following clear and copious review of the connection that subsisted, during the days of St. Patrick, between the Irish and the Caledonians—as well as of the progress and state of the Catholic religion in Ireland, from the fifth to the sixth century.

“It has been seen, from the letter of St. Patrick to Coroticus, that, so late as the middle of the fifth century, the incursions of the Picts and Scots into the territories of the Britons had not yet been discontinued. About the commencement of the same century (A. D. 409,) Britain had ceased to form a portion of the Roman empire; the separation, according to some opinions, having been voluntary on the part of Britain,* while far more obviously it is to be accounted for by the enfeebled state of the Roman power, which rendered the occupation of so remote a province no longer practicable. How little prepared were the Britons themselves for independence, at this period, appears from the helplessness of their struggle against the aggressions of their neighbours, and the piteous entreaties for aid so often addressed by them to Rome; while the prompt attention, as far as the resources of the sinking empire would admit, which these appeals generally received, proves the reluctance with which the connection was then severed to have been mutual.

“In consequence of their urgent solicitations to Honorius, that emperor despatched to the aid of the Britons a single legion, which,

* Dr. Lingard has followed Gibbon in asserting, on no other authority than a few words of Zosimus, that the Britons at this time voluntary threw off their allegiance. But the force of evidence, as well as of probability, is all opposed to such a supposition.

for a time, suspended the attacks of their invaders; but no sooner was this legion withdrawn for the protection of Gaul, than again the Scots and Picts, breaking through the now unregarded wall of Severus, or else sailing around the ends, carried their ravages into the very heart of Britain. Once more, the interference of the Romans succeeded in turning aside this scourge. Ambassadors, sent from the suffering province to Valentinian, and appearing before him, as is said, with their garments rent, and sand strewed over their heads,* so far excited the emperor's pity, that a last effort was made for them, and a force, under the command of Gallio of Ravenna, despatched seasonably to their relief. As in all the preceding cases, however, the interposition was but temporary. The Roman general, summoned away, with the whole of his force, to repress rebellion in Africa, announced to the Britons that they must thenceforward look to their own defence; and, from that period, the imperial protection was entirely withdrawn from the island. No sooner had the Romans taken their departure than the work of rapine recommenced; and, as the historian of these devastations expresses it, "foul droves of Picts and Scots emerged from out their currachs, just as, when the sun is at his burning height, dark battalions of reptiles are seen to crawl from out their earth-holes."† Both in this writer and in Bede we find the most frightful representations of the state of misery to which the Britons were now reduced by the "anniversary" visitations of their spoilers.‡

"From the period of Gallio's command, (A. D. 426,) during which was erected, between the Solway and Tyne, the last and most important of all the Roman walls, we hear no more of the sufferings of the Britons till the time when St. Patrick addressed his letter to Coroticus, and when that last great irruption of the Picts and Scots took place, which drove the Britons at length, in their despair, to invoke the perilous protection of the Saxons. It was in the extremity to which they had then found themselves reduced, that, looking again to the Romans, they addressed to Ætius, the popular captain of the day, that memorable letter inscribed "The Groans of the Britons." But the standard of Attila was then advancing towards Gaul, and all the force of the empire was summoned to oppose his progress. Rome, prodigal so long of her strength to others, now trembled for her own safety; and the ravagers of Britain were, accordingly, left to enjoy their prey undisturbed.

"By the arrival of the Saxons, the balance of fortune was soon turned the other way; and the Scots and Picts became, in their

* "Itemque mittuntur queruli Legati, scissis, ut dicitur, vestibibus, opertisque sablone capitibus, impetrantes a Romanis auxilia," &c.—GILDAS.

† "Itaque illis ad sua revertentibus, emergunt certatim de Curicis quibus sunt trans Scythicam vallem vecti, quasi in alto Titane, incalescentesque caumate, de arctissimis foraminum cavernulis, fuscis vermiculorum cunei, tetri Scotorum Pictorumque greges," &c.—GILDAS.

For the purpose of representing his countrymen, in ancient times, as Troglodytes, the reverend antiquary, Ledwich, has not hesitated to separate the simile in this passage from the context, and to produce it as evidence that the Irish at that time lived in earth-holes.

‡ Quia anniversarias avide prædas, nullo obsistente, trans maria exaggerabant.—GILDAS, c. 14.

turn, the vanquished. To the unhappy Britons, however, this success brought but a change of evils; as their treacherous allies, having first helped them to expel the Scots and Picts, then made use of the latter, as auxiliaries, to crush and subjugate the Britons. In all these transactions it is to be remembered, that under the general name of Scots are comprehended not merely the descendants of the Irish colony, long settled in North Britain, but also the native Scots of Ireland themselves, who were equally concerned in most of these expeditions; and who, however contemptuously, as we have seen, Gildas has affected to speak of their currachs, had already fitted out two naval armaments sufficiently notorious to be commemorated by the great poet of Rome's latter days. The share taken by the Irish, in these irruptions into Britain, is noticed frequently both by Gildas and Bede:—"They emerge eagerly," says the former, "from their currachs, in which they have been wafted across the Scytic Valley,"—the name anciently given to the sea between Britain and Ireland. "The impudent Irish plunderers," says Bede, "return to their homes, only to come back again shortly."*

"Of the three great 'Devastations' of Britain, recorded by the former of these writers, two had occurred in the reign of the monarch Leogaire, who ruled over Ireland at the time of St. Patrick's mission. How far this prince was concerned in originating, or taking a personal share in any of these expeditions, does not appear from the records of his long reign; and, among the domestic transactions in which he was engaged, his war upon the Lagenians, or people of Leinster, to enforce the payment of the odious Boromean tribute, seems alone to be worthy of any notice. Defeated by the troops of this province in a sanguinary action, which was called, from the place where it occurred, the Battle of the Ford of the Oaks, Leogaire was himself made prisoner, and regained his freedom only on consenting to swear, by the Sun and the Wind, that he never would again lay claim to the payment of the tribute. This solemn oath, however, the rapacious monarch did not hesitate to infringe,—his courtly Druids having conveniently absolved him from the obligation; and, on his death occurring a short time after, it was said that, to punish his false appeal to their divinities, the Sun and the Wind had destroyed him.† This Pagan oath, and his continued commerce with the Druids, to the very year before he died, shows that Leogaire had either at no time become a Christian, or else had relapsed into Paganism.‡

* *Revertuntur ergo impudentes grassatores Hiberni domus, post non longum tempus reversuri.*

† Thus recorded in the annals of the Four Masters:—"A. D. 457, anno 29. regni Laogarii filii Nialli Prælium Vadi Quercuum gestum a Lageniensibus contra Laogarium filium Nialli. Captus est Laogarius in prælio isto, et juravit jusjurandum Solis et Venti, et Elementorum, Lageniensibus, non venturum se contra eos, durante vita, ob intentum istum.

"A. D. 458, postquam fuisset 30 annis in Regimine Hiberniæ Laogarius filius Nialli Novi-obsidum, occisus est prope Cassiam inter Erin et Albaniam (i. e. duos colles qui sunt in regione Faolan,) et Sol et Ventus occiderunt eum quia temeravit eos."

‡ The Tripartite Life of St. Patrick states that Leogaire was not a sincere believer, and that he was accustomed to say his father Nial had laid an injunction

“The fervid eagerness and rapidity with which the new faith had been embraced wore so much the appearance of that sort of enthusiasm which mere novelty often excites, that it would have seemed but in the natural course of affairs had there succeeded a lull to all this excitement, and had such a burst of religious zeal, throughout the great mass of the people,—deprived entirely, as it was, of the fuel which persecution always ministers,—subsided speedily into that state of languor, if not of dangerous indifference, in which the uncontested triumph of human desires almost invariably ends. But in this, as in all other respects, the course of the change now worked in the minds of the people of Ireland was peculiar and unprecedented; and, striking as were their zeal and promptitude in adopting the new faith, the steady fervour with which they now devoted themselves to its doctrines and discipline was even still more remarkable. From this period, indeed, the drama of Irish history begins to assume an entirely different character. Instead of the furious strife of kings and chieftains forming, as before, its main action and interest, this stormy spectacle gives way to the pure and peaceful triumphs of religion. Illustrious saints, of both sexes, pass in review before our eyes;—the cowl and the veil eclipse the glory even of the regal crown; and, instead of the grand and festive halls of Tara and Emania, the lonely cell of the fasting penitent becomes the scene of fame.

“It is to be recollected, however, that, through all this picture, the hands of ecclesiastics have chiefly guided the pencil; and, though there can be no doubt that the change effected in the minds and hearts of the people, was, to a great extent, as real as it is wonderful, it was yet by no means either so deep or so general as on the face of these monkish annals it appears. While this peaceful pageant of saints and apostles so prominently occupies the foreground, frequent glimpses of scenes of blood are caught dimly in the distance, and the constant appeal to the sword, and the frequent falling of kings suddenly from their thrones, prove the ancient political habits of the people to have experienced but little change. In the page of the annalist, however, all this is kept subordinate or thrown into the shade; and while, for two or three centuries after the introduction of Christianity, the history of the Kings of Ireland presents but a meagre list of names, the acts of her missionaries and her saints, and the pious labours of her scholars, afford materials for detail as abundant and minute as they are, in many instances, it must be owned, sterile and uninteresting.

“The only event of high political importance, which occurs through the whole of this period, took place at the commencement of the sixth century, not long after the death of St. Patrick; and this was the establishment, under the sons of Erek, of that Scotie or Irish monarchy in North Britain, which not only extended its sway, in the course of a few centuries, over the whole of the modern Scotland, but transmitted, through the race of the Stuarts, a long succession of monarchs to Great Britain. The colony planted in those

on him never to embrace the Christian faith, but to adhere to the gods of his ancestors. See Lanigan, chap. 5, note 53.

regions, by Carbre Rieda, in the middle of the third century, though constantly fed with supplies from the parent stock, the Dalriadians of Antrim, had run frequent risks of extirpation from the superior power of their neighbours and rivals, the Picts. In the year 503, however, the Dalriadian princes of Ireland, aided by the then all-powerful influence of the Hy-Nial family, were enabled to transplant a new colony into North Britain, which, extending the limits of the former settlement, set up for the first time a regal authority, and became, in less than a century, sufficiently powerful to shake off all dependence upon Ireland.* The territory possessed by these original Scots appears to have included, in addition to the Western Isles, the whole of the mountainous district now called Argyleshire; and from the time of the erection of this Irish sovereignty, North Britain continued, for some centuries, to be divided between two distinct monarchies, the Scottish and the Pictish; till, at length, in the reign of Keneth Mac-Alpine, after a long and fierce struggle, the people of the Picts were entirely vanquished, and the Scots left sole masters of the country.

“The memorable migration of the sons of Erck, is marked by the Irish annalists as having occurred twenty years after the great battle of Ocha, in which Olill Molt, the successor of Leogaire in the monarchy of Ireland, was slain. This battle itself, too, constituted an era in Irish history, as the race of the Nials, on whose side victory then declared, were, by the fortune of that day’s combat, rendered masters of all Ireland. The law established in the reign of Tuathal confining the succession to his own family, and excluding the princes of the other lines from the monarchy, was now wholly set aside; and the Hy-Nials, taking possession of the supreme government, held it uninterruptedly through a course of more than five hundred years.

“Of the two kings who succeeded Olill Molt, namely, Lugad and Murcertach, the reign of one extended to twenty-five years, and that of the other to twenty-one; and yet of the former reign all that we find recorded is the names of some battles which signalized its course; while of the grandson of Erck, nothing further is commemorated than that, in A. D. 534, he fought five battles, and, in the following year, was drowned in a hogshead of wine.† It is, however, but just to add, that he is represented as a good and pious sovereign, and

* The facts of the history of this colony have been thus well summed up by Roy (Military Antiq.):—

“There is incontrovertible authority to join the Irish with the Picts in their martial exploits against the Romans, as well from the Latin, as from the ancient British and Saxon, writers. It is clear, not only from all the Scotch history we have of the times, but from Bede, from the most authentic writers for an age or two before and after him, and from the Roman writers, that Scotland, during the Roman domination in Britain, subsisted under two different monarchies, Irish and Pictish.” I have given this passage as I find it cited by Dr. O’Connor, having searched in vain for it in the folio edition of Roy’s works, 1793.

† This royal event, as appears by the fragments on the subject remaining, was commemorated by many of the poets of that period.—See the Annals of the Four Masters, ad ann. 534. It is supposed, from the mention in most of the Lives of St. Columbanus, of the circumstance of an Irish ship trading to Nantes, in the sixth century, that wine was imported into Ireland from that city.

was the first of the Irish monarchs who can, with any degree of certainty, be pronounced Christian.

"At the commencement of the sixth century, Christianity had become almost universal throughout Ireland; and before its close her church could boast of a considerable number of holy persons, whose fame for sanctity and learning has not been confined to their own country, but is still cherished and held in reverence by the great majority of the Christian world. Among these ornaments of a period whose general want of intellectual illumination rendered its few shining lights the more conspicuous, stands pre-eminently the Apostle of the Western Isles, Columb-Kille, who was born in the reign of Murcertach, about the year 521, and who, from the great activity and variety of his spiritual enterprises, was so mixed up with the public transactions of his times, that an account of his life and acts would be found to include within its range all that is most remarkable in the contemporary history of his country.

"In citing for historical purposes the Lives of Saints, of whatever age or country, considerable caution ought, of course, to be observed. But there are writers, and those not among the highest, who, in the pride of fancied wisdom, affect a contempt for this species of evidence, which is, to say the least of it, shallow. Both Montesquieu and Gibbon* knew far better how to appreciate the true value of such works, as sources of historical information; being well aware that, in times when personages renowned for sanctity held such influence over all ranks and classes, and were even controllers of the thoughts and actions of kings, it is often in the private lives of these spiritual heroes alone that the true moving springs of the history of their age is to be sought.

"Previously to entering, however, on any personal details respecting either Columba or any other of those distinguished Irishmen whose zeal contributed so much at this period, not merely in their own country, but throughout all the British Isles, to the general diffusion of Christianity, it may not be irrelevant to inquire briefly into the peculiar nature of the doctrines which these spiritual successors of our great apostle taught. An attempt has been made, enforced by the learning of the admirable Usher, to prove that the

* "The ancient legends," says Gibbon, "deserve some regard, as they are obliged to connect their fables with the real history of their own times." Montesquieu acknowledges still more strongly the use to be derived from such works:—

"Quoiqu'on puisse reprocher aux auteurs de ces Vies d'avoir été quelquefois un peu trop crédules sur des choses que Dieu a certainement faites, si elles ont été dans l'ordre de ses desseins, on ne laisse pas d'en tirer de grandes lumières sur les mœurs et les usages de ces temps-là."—*Liv. xxx. chap. 2.*

Sir James Mackintosh follows eloquently in the same tract:—

"The vast collections of the Lives of Saints often throws light on public events, and opens glimpses into the habits of men in those times; nor are they wanting in sources of interest, though poetical and moral rather than historical. . . . The whole force of this noble attempt to exalt human nature was at this period spent on the Lives of the Saints,—a sort of moral heroes or demigods, without some acquaintance with whom it is hard to comprehend an age when the commemoration of the virtues then most venerated, as they were embodied in these holy men, was the principal theme of the genius of Christendom."—*Vol. i. chap. 2.*

See, on the same subject, the remarks of the Benedictines (*Hist. Littéraire de la France*.) in speaking of the writers of the seventh century.

church founded by St. Patrick in Ireland held itself independent of Rome, and; on most of the leading points of Christian doctrine, professed the opinions maintained at present by Protestants. But rarely, even in the warfare of religious controversy, has there been hazarded an assertion so little grounded upon fact. In addition to the original link formed with Rome, from her having appointed the first Irish missionaries, we find in a canon of one of the earliest Synods held in Ireland a clear acknowledgment of the supremacy of the Roman see. Nor was this recognition confined merely to words; as, on the very first serious occasion of controversy which presented itself,—the dispute relative to the time of celebrating Easter,—it was resolved, conformably to the words of this canon, that “the question should be referred to the Head of Cities,” and, a deputation being accordingly despatched to Rome for the purpose, the Roman practice, on this point, was ascertained and adopted.

“Respecting the nature of the religious doctrines and observances taught by the earliest Christian preachers in Ireland, we have, both in the accounts of their devotional practices and in their writings, the most satisfactory as well as ample information. That they celebrated mass under the ancient traditional names of the Holy Mysteries of the Eucharist, the Sacrifice of Salvation,* the Immolation of the Host, is admitted by Usher himself. But he might have found language even still stronger employed by them to express the mystery their faith acknowledged in that rite.† The ancient practice of offering up prayers for the dead,‡ and the belief of a middle state of existence, after this life, upon which that practice is founded, formed also parts of their creed;§ though of the locality of the

* The phrase used by St. Chrysostom, in speaking of the progress of the faith in the British Isles, implies in itself that the belief held in those regions respecting the Eucharist was the very same which he himself enforced in his writings, and which the Catholic church maintains to the present day. “They have erected churches (says the saint,) and Altars of Sacrifice.”

† Following the belief of the ancient Christian church, as to a Real Presence in the sacrament, they adopted the language also by which this mystery was expressed; and the phrase of “*making the body of Christ*,” which occurs so frequently in the Liturgies of the primitive Church, is found likewise in the writings of the first Irish Christians. Thus Adamnan, in his Life of St. Columba, tells of that Saint ordering the bishop, Cronan, “*Christi corpus ex more conficere*.” Lib. i. c. 44. In later Irish writers, numerous passages to the same purport may be found; but, confining myself to those only of the earlier period, I shall add but the following strong testimony from Sedulius:—

Corpus, sanguis, aqua, tria vitæ numera nostræ;
Fonte renascentes, membris et sanguine Christi
Vescimur, atque ideo templum Deitatis habemur;
Quod servare Deus nos annuat immaculatum,
Et faciat tennes tanto Mansore capaces.

Carmen Paschale, lib. iv.

‡ Oblationes pro defunctis annua die facimus.—TERTULL.

§ It is acknowledged by Usher that Requiem masses were among the religious practices of the Irish Christians in those days; but he denies that they were anything more than “an honourable commemoration of the dead, and a sacrifice of thanksgiving for their salvation.” It has been shown clearly, however, that these masses were meant to be also, in the strongest sense of the word, propitiatory. In an old Irish missal, found at Bobbio, of which an account has been given in the *Rer. Hibern. Script.* (Ep. Nunc. cxxxviii.) there is contained a mass for the dead, entitled “*Pro Defunctis*,” in which the following prayer, and others no less Ca-

purgatorial fire their notions were, like those of the ancient Fathers, vague and undefined. In an old Life of St. Brendan, who lived in the sixth century, it is stated, "the prayer of the living doth much profit the dead;" and, among the canons of a very early Irish Synod, there is one entitled "Of the Oblation for the dead." Of the frequent practice, indeed, of prayer and almsgiving for the relief of departed souls, there are to be found throughout the records of those times abundant proofs. In a tract attributed to Cummian, who lived in the seventh century, and of whose talents and learning we shall hereafter have occasion to speak, propitiatory masses for the dead are mentioned. The habit of invoking and praying to saints was, it is evident, general among the ancient Irish Christians; and a Life of St. Brigid, written, according to Ware, in the seventh century, concludes with the following words:—"There are two holy virgins in heaven who may undertake my protection, Mary and St. Brigid, on whose patronage let each of us depend."*

"The penitential discipline established in their monasteries was of the most severe description. The weekly fast-days observed by the whole Irish church were, according to the practice of the primitive times, Wednesdays and Fridays: and the abstinence of the monks, and of the more pious among the laity, was carried to an extreme unknown in later days. The benefit of pilgrimages also was inculcated; and we find mention occasionally, in the Annals, of princes dying in pilgrimage.† The practice of auricular confession, and their belief in the power of the priest to absolve from sin, is proved by the old penitential canons, and by innumerable passages in the Lives of their Saints.‡

"The only point, indeed, either of doctrine or discipline,—and under this latter head alone the exception falls,—in which the least difference, of any moment, can be detected between the religion professed by the first Irish Christians and that of the Catholics of the present day, is with respect to the marriage of the clergy, which, as appears from the same sources of evidence that have furnished all the foregoing proofs, was, though certainly not approved of, yet permitted and practised. Besides a number of incidental proofs of this fact, the sixth Canon of the Synod attributed to St. Patrick enjoins

tholic, are to be found:—"Concede propitius, ut hæc sacra oblatio mortuis prosit ad veniam; et vivis proficiat ad salutem."

* See Lanigan, Ecclesiast. Hist. vol. iii. chap. 20. note 107.

† See Tigernach, A. D. 610, and also 723. In the Annals of the Four Masters, A. D. 777, the pilgrimage of a son of the king of Connaught to the Isle of Hyona is recorded.

‡ On this point Usher acknowledges that "they did (no doubt) both publicly and privately make confession of their faults," (chap. 5.) and adds, in proof of this fact, what follows:—"One old penitential canon we find laid down in a synod held in this country, about the year of our Lord 450, by St. Patrick, Auxilius, and Isserninus, which is as followeth:—'A Christian who hath killed a man, or committed fornication, or gone unto a soothsayer, after the manner of the Gentiles, for every one of those crimes shall do a year of penance; when his year of penance is accomplished, he shall come with witnesses, and afterward he shall be absolved by the priest.' " Usher contends, however, for their having in so far differed from the belief of the present Catholics, that they did not attribute to the priest any more than a ministerial power in the remission of sins.

that "the clerk's wife shall not walk out without having her head veiled."*

"The evidence which Usher has adduced to prove, that communion in both kinds was permitted to the laity among the Irish, is by no means conclusive or satisfactory;†—though it would certainly appear, from one of the Canons of the Penitential of St. Columbanus,‡ that, before the introduction of his rule, novices had been admitted to the cup. It is to be remembered, however, that any difference of practice, in this respect, has been always considered as a mere point of discipline, and accordingly subject to such alteration as the change of time and circumstances may require."

CHAPTER XLV.

Accession of Olioll to the throne.—His reign and death, A. D. 478. Lughha, the son of Laoghaire, a former monarch, succeeds to the crown.—His reign and death.

PRINCE OLIOLL, the son of the monarch Dathy, who commanded the expedition destined to reinforce Laoghaire, on landing in Caledonia, was proclaimed king by the army. To obtain the sanction of the national estates to his assumption of the regal authority, he resolved to evacuate the strong holds which he had on the frontiers of Britain, and to transport the principal part of his army to Ireland, to support his claims to the crown. As soon as the convention of the national estates heard of his arrival in Ulster, with a potent army, they elected him monarch of Ireland, and sent a deputation of nobles as far as Dundalk, in the county of Louth, to meet and congratulate him on his accession to the throne of his ancestors. From Dundalk, we are told by Molloy, he proceeded to the abbey of St. Mary's, in the town of Louth,§ where St. Mocte, a disciple of

* If the term clerk here be understood to comprise all the members of the clerical orders, the permission to marry extended also, of course, to priests; but it is thought by some that the words of the canon apply only to the inferior ranks of the clergy. "With respect to our English church (says Dr. Milner,) at the end of the sixth century, we gather from St. Gregory's permission for the clerks in minor orders to take wives, that this was unlawful for the clergy in holy orders, namely, for bishops, priests, and deacons, agreeably to a well-known rule of reasoning, 'Exceptio confirmat regulam;' and we are justified in inferring the same with respect to the Irish clergy in St. Patrick's time."—*Inquiry into certain vulgar opinions*, &c. &c. Letter 14.

† He founds his conclusion chiefly on their use of such phrases as "the communion of the Lord's body and blood;" whereas the Catholics of the present day, among whom the laity receive the sacrament under one kind only, use the very same language.

‡ Columban. in Pœnitent., as I find it thus cited by Ceillier:—"Novi quia indocti et quicunque tales fuerint, ad calicem non accedant."

§ Louth, from which the county of Louth derives its name, situated about five miles north-west of Dundalk, could once boast of seven churches, four abbeyes, and three feudal castles, all now piles of ruins. In the abbey of St. Mary are the mouldering remains of several tombs, in which many of the primates of Ireland

St. Patrick, and founder of that monastery, inaugurated him king, according to the rites of the Christian dispensation. This was the first of our monarchs, who was crowned by the hands of a Christian prelate. From Louth he set out for Tara, where he was received by the provincial princes and national estates with every demonstration of loyalty and respect. This monarch married Uchdealb, the daughter of Angus, king of Munster; an alliance that strengthened his power, and enabled him to exact the Leinster tribute three times without being forced to have recourse to arms. The king of Connaught, Amalgaid, was also his relation and ally, so that submission was the wisest policy which the king of Leinster could have adopted under such circumstances. Amalgaid was a distinguished warrior, "who was," says O'Flaherty, "victorious in nine sea fights and many land engagements."

This monarch, who loved the blessings of peace, and is represented by our annalists as more ambitious of rendering his people happy than of distinguishing himself by military fame, assiduously applied all his thoughts to the internal policy of the kingdom. His spirit gave life and animation to the operations of commerce and agriculture. He caused the laws to be revised, so as to afford a wider scope to the freedom of his people. Literature and the arts, also, flourished under his cheering auspices. At the suggestion of the monarch, the national estates passed a law for encouraging trade and the mechanical arts. A commission, consisting of sixty intelligent men, well experienced in science, commerce, and the mechanical arts, was appointed to visit the chief towns and maritime ports, for the purpose of reporting, from an accurate survey, the state of commerce, mechanics, and the arts, and to suggest plans for their progressive improvement.

But, though the encouragement of the arts of peace, the amelioration of the condition of the middle classes of the people, and the general spread of national prosperity, were the primary objects to which he directed his active attention, he did not forget that to preserve this internal happiness, it was necessary to watch the enemies of his kingdom abroad, and to guard against external danger. Accordingly, we are informed, that he kept up a considerable body of troops in Caledonia, and on the frontiers of Britain, to assist his Dalriadan allies, and to oppose the designs of the Saxons and their

were interred. The abbot of St. Mary's was a peer of parliament, and bore, for centuries, the title of Bishop of Louth. He had episcopal authority over the sees of Clogher and Louth, and the right of presentation to the rectories of Dundalk, Ardee, Louth, Drumiskien, Kilsaren, Dunleer, Drumcar, Clonkeen, Stickillen, Churchtown, Haggardstown, Tallanstown, and Smarmore. But the abbot of Louth was deprived of these rights by Edward II., in 1316; in consequence of his having crowned Edward Bruce king of Ireland, in the church of Dundalk. In addition to the abbey founded by St. Mocte, the first bishop of Louth, a magnificent priory was erected by Donough O'Carroll, prince of Urial, in 1148, and another by Edan O'Kelly, in 1150. These abbeys were munificently endowed. Henry VIII., on the suppression of the monasteries, made a grant of the estates of the religious houses of Louth to Sir Oliver Plunkett, the first baron of Louth. Louth is gradually decaying, though it stands in the midst of as fertile a district of country as any in Ireland. The greater part of the town belongs to the present Lord Louth.

British dependents. Every act of the reign of this patriotic monarch was dictated by the soundest principles of prudence and policy ; but, notwithstanding the wisdom and justice which appeared in all the measures of his administration, he had to contend with internal discords and party divisions, and he found that the tranquil and peaceable reign which he had hitherto enjoyed was not solely owing to the popularity of his impartial government, but that he was partly indebted for it to his alliance and connection with the kings of Munster and Connaught. At this epoch of his reign, 476, the death of his father-in-law convinced him that though wisdom may be the means of securing power, yet still, that wisdom without power cannot insure or command obedience.

As soon as the Lagenians were made acquainted with the death of Angus, they began to manifest a disposition of resistance, and to speak of the imposts exacted from them as despotic and grievous. They now boldly assumed an attitude of independence and defiance. The tribute which they had already paid the monarch several times was now peremptorily refused ; and several severe engagements, fought with various success, was the result of their praiseworthy resistance to despotic aggression. Olioll, however, sometimes succeeded in exacting by force what he could not acquire by authority. He was yet but successful at times in his hostile attacks on Leinster ; and, while he was thus weakening and frittering away his power in an unprofitable predatory warfare, he was encouraging a more dangerous enemy, to dispute with him the sovereignty of the entire kingdom.

Lugha, the son of Laoghair, and grandson of the famous Nial, being disqualified by his age to become a candidate for the kingdom, on the death of his father, had scarcely passed his minority, when he began to indulge hopes of attaining to the monarchy. This young prince was highly educated, and he possessed a genius that served to impart an impulse to his daring ambition. His polished manners and winning address gained for him great popularity amongst the princes and nobles of the kingdom. When he had organized his plans, and after having gained the alliance of several Irish princes, particularly of Murtough O'Niel, and of the king of Leinster, whose daughter he had married, he sent, agreeably to the custom of all pretenders to the Irish crown, his ambassador to the monarch, to demand a formal resignation of the throne, or otherwise to give a challenge to meet him in the field of battle, and to decide their respective claims by the sword.

The monarch, equal to his rival in bravery, appointed a day and place of action ; and having summoned all his friends and tributaries, the hostile armies met, in pursuance of agreement, on the plains of Ocha, in the county of Carlow, where the sanguinary conflict was disputed with such resolution on both sides, that victory remained for a long while doubtful. The valiant Olioll, perceiving, at length, that the fortune of the day inclined to his adversary, rushed, with heroic courage, into the midst of the engagement, at the head of his personal guards, determined to decide the contest by his own death, or by that of his rival. The royal combatants met, like enraged

lions, and the valiant Olioll, in the gigantic struggle, fell by the hand of his more fortunate antagonist. This battle, which terminated the life of Olioll in the nineteenth year of his reign, was fought in May A. D. 478.

The pacific administration of Olioll was the source of national prosperity and happiness, because it was based on justice, equitable rights, and legislative wisdom. His attempts to levy the Leinster tribute are the only acts of his reign that approached despotism. The victor, Lugha, was proclaimed king on the field of battle, and immediately after crowned with great solemnity at Tara. He commenced his reign by rewarding the generals and chieftains who aided him in obtaining the decisive victory which paved his way to the throne. The territories of Delvin Rugad, in the county of Roscommon—Delvin Culfabhar, and Delvin Teadha, in the county of Galway, were bestowed on the sons of Lugha. Our annalists tell us that several sanguinary engagements were fought during this reign, but the name of the battle fields, or of the heroes who figured in them, has been withheld from us. We are, therefore, left totally in the dark, with regard to the causes which produced the state of warfare, that raged at that epoch in Ireland. We may however impute it, we think, with some justice to the discords and restless ambition that agitated our chieftains in those days of savage valour and ungovernable pride.

The Leinster tribute that kept the flames of civil hostility ever glowing, and Lugha, like his predecessors, laid claim to that odious impost, and invaded Leinster to extort the payment of it; but he was defeated and routed by the Lagenians, at the battle of *Kille Osnoch*, in the county of Carlow. Murtough O'Niel invaded Connaught about this era, 483, and spread ruin and misery through the whole province. It is strange that no Irish historian has furnished us with the particulars of these desultory conflicts. O'Flaherty, indeed, informs us, that in a battle on the borders of Lough Corrib, in the county of Galway, in which the Connacians were defeated, and that three sons of the king of Connaught, whose names were Eugene, Olioll, and Duach, fell under the swords of the Ultonians.

From the chasms left unfilled by our annalists in their narrative of the occurrences of those days, it would seem that the civil history of this epoch was compiled from tradition. The great events that had taken place, and the battles which had been fought, could not be forgotten in the course of one or two centuries; while the causes in which they originated might soon escape recollection, having nothing of that marvellous quality which alone could fix them on the public attention. Accordingly, where causes have been assigned, there is room, in some cases, to suspect their authenticity. The deaths of Dathy and Laoghair, two successive monarchs, have been attributed to lightning, and the death of Lugha, the next king in succession but one, has been imputed to the same cause. A person must have much historic faith to believe, that three nearly successive princes should fall victims to the same element. Their deaths, it is true, have been accounted for by Christian writers as the consequence of their impiety. But we do not remember an instance in

the sacred writings, where lightning has been made the instrument of God's wrath. The probability is, that some Christian antiquarian, moved by a pious zeal for the cause of religion, but not reflecting, that no cause, however sacred, should be promoted at the expense of truth, had recourse to these sanctimonious stratagems and delusions to annex the idea of punishment, even in this life, to the pursuits of vice and immorality.

It was at this juncture that the Picts revolted from the sovereign authority of the Dalriad colony, and succeeded in driving the Irish and their descendants into the mountains. Reduced to this exigency, their princes Angus, Fergus, and Lorn, sent ambassadors to the Irish monarch, Lugha, to solicit his aid and protection.

The appeal was no sooner urged than complied with. The monarch in person led the expedition to the shores of Caledonia, A. D. 508, where he soon reduced the Picts to servile obedience. But as he was preparing to return to his kingdom he was killed by a thunder-bolt, in the thirtieth year of his reign.

"His death," says Dr. Warner, "is said to have been from the vengeance of heaven, in consequence of his having opposed the preaching of St. Patrick, and otherwise endeavoured to stop the dissemination of Christianity in Ireland." Lugha's character, like that of many of his predecessors, was a compound of vice and virtue. He was ambitious and valiant, and always desirous of acquiring military fame at the expense of justice and freedom.

CHAPTER XLVI.

The accession of Murtough to the throne.—His reign and death.—Dr. Ledwich's objections noticed.—Tuathal re-elected Monarch.—He reduces the Picts to complete subjection.—His reign and death.

As soon as the news of the death of Lugha, in the manner detailed in the last chapter, arrived in Ireland, the national estates assembled for the purpose of electing a successor to the crown. Their choice fell on *Murtough*, the son of Muireadhach, who was the grandson of Nial of the nine hostages. This prince acquired great eminence by his exploits in the campaigns against the *Caledonian Picts** during the two preceding reigns.

* "Even the name of Scotland, and of her great families, the Campbells, the McAllens, McDonnells, Loons, and other clans, prove, if proof were wanted, that the Scotch were of Irish origin."—NICHOLSON.

"The Albanians were called *Picts* by the Irish invaders, because they generally painted their bodies."—BEDE.

"It is to Ireland that Scotland is indebted for the name of *Caledonia*, which appellation was bestowed upon her by Carbre, the prince of the Dalriada, in compliment to his chief General Cathluan; for Cathluan is with us pronounced Caluan, and *Don* is used to denote the posterity of some eminent personage. Thus *Caledonia* implies in Irish the descendants of *Caleran*."—M'DERMOTT.

His election gave great satisfaction to the nation. Our annalists concur in asserting that this monarch ascended the throne A. D. 503. His queen was *Sabina*, a Connacian princess, whose piety and amiable virtues are greatly eulogized by our historians, who rank her among the Irish saints. We know but little of the events of Murtough's reign. The transactions of this epoch are almost passed over in silence by our antiquarians, which is rather strange, as they tell us that he fought seventeen battles, yet without saying a word of their causes or informing us who were the opponents of the monarch. Dr. O'Halloran, indeed, accounts for the neglect evinced by our annalists in recording the occurrences of Lugh's reign, by supposing that king to have apostatized; but the present monarch is allowed by that historian himself, not only to have lived and died in the Christian faith, but even to be exemplary for his piety. Why then the same unaccountable neglect, unless we attribute it to the cause which we have already assigned?

O'Flaherty acquaints us that five of the seventeen engagements in which this monarch commanded were fought in one year; but we are at a loss to know whether he was either victorious or vanquished in any of them.

Dr. Keating has given us the names of the scenes of these battles; but he could furnish no other particulars.

The troops of Murtough occupied all the strong holds in Caledonia at this period, in order to overawe the Picts, and protect the Irish colony, the Dalriada.

Shortly after his accession, by the advice of the national estates, he created his cousin Fergus, King of the Albanian Scots, and compelled the Picts to swear allegiance to him.

We are assured by all our creditable historians that he sent the famous *Liagh Fail*, or stone of destiny, to Scotland, either to add greater solemnity to the coronation of Fergus, or to prevent the seeds of disaffection and rebellion from prevailing among his subjects, who were composed of Irish, Picts, Albanians, and Britons, by impressing them with a strong conviction of the stability of his throne; as they gave full credit to the prediction that wherever the stone of destiny remained, a Milesian prince should reign over the country which had it in possession.

We have already given a comprehensive account of the stone of destiny, and of the miraculous power attributed to it, in the beginning of this history, so that it would be inexcusable tautology to introduce another narrative of that subject here.

The successors of the Irish prince, Fergus, bold and enterprising heroes, extended from time to time the frontiers of their kingdom, so that Kenneth, the son of Alpin, in the ninth century, totally destroyed the PICTISH monarchy, and assumed, by the consent of the Irish monarch, Nial III. the title of King of Scotia Minor.*

* *Vide* Laing, Pinckerton, and Fordun.

"Nial only sanctioned this assumption of an independent sovereign by his relative, in a country which was his colony on condition that the kings of Scotia Minor should always pay tribute and do homage to the monarchs of Ireland."—O'SULLIVAN.

"The Albanian Picts were never known by the name of Scots until after Nial

In the reign of Murtough architecture and sculpture were carried to the highest pitch of perfection. The palaces and abbeys erected at this time were superbly decorated in the enrichments of the sister arts. At this juncture too, poetry, classical learning, astronomy, and mathematics were assiduously cultivated by the people of Ireland. There is still extant an Irish poem, written by Terna Eiges, in the reign of Nial the Great, in which there is a spirited description given of the marble busts of the Irish monarchs, which filled the niches of the royal sepulchre of Cruachan, in the county of Roscommon. We can adduce another testimony of our exquisite skill in the art of sculpture and architecture, in Cogitosus's biography of St. Bridget, who bears honourable evidence to the beauty, magnificence, and magnitude of the monuments of that saint as well as of her contemporary, St. Conlaith. He says, "these tombs, which I saw with my own eyes, were exquisitely finished, and adorned with gold, silver, and precious stones, with crowns of gold and silver suspended over them; and the church of Kildare was hung with many paintings representing the sufferings of Christ."

Dr. Ledwich, who, in his vile spirit of national apostacy, sooner than acknowledge the use of sculpture and painting in Ireland, laboured with his usual assiduity to prove Cogitosus, like St. Patrick, an imaginary being, merely because he described, in his book, the ornaments and paintings which he saw with his own eyes in the church of Kildare.

He has written pages in endeavouring to prop up the venal falsehoods of Hume respecting Ireland. "I have examined several authorities," says he, "but could find no evidence supplied by antiquity, that the Irish had domestic edifices or religious structures of lime and stone, antecedent to the invasion of the Danes, in the ninth century. Tacitus proves that the Germans were not acquainted with the composition of mortar in his time. The life of the ancient Irish, like that of the Germans, was truly pastoral, a state of society where no one expects to find durable structures. Whatever change Christianity operated on the religious sentiments of the Irish, it

the Great gave the modern Scotland the name of *Scotia Minor* in the fifth age."—*Hutchinson's Defence*.

The Picts and the Irish, whom Eumenius the rhetorician, towards the end of the third century, in his panegyric on Constance Cæsar, calls the ordinary enemies of the Britons, are designated, by Ammianus and Claudian under the name of *Scots* and Picts, from which bishop Usher proves that Ireland must be taken for the true country of the Scots; in confirmation of which he quotes the verses of Claudian, in which that poet represents the Scots as the inhabitants of the country which he calls *Jerne*. In the fifth age, we have the testimony of Paul of Orasius, who, in his description of Ireland says that it is inhabited by Scots; *a Scotorum gentibus coletur*.

But authorities are useless to establish historical facts. Scotland owes every thing to Ireland; but she is like Lear's daughter an ungrateful and unkind child.—M'DERMOTT.

"So late even as the eleventh century, the Irish are not spoken of by any other name than *Scots*, by Herman, in the first tome of his chronicle, by Marianus Scotus, and by Florentius Wigorniensis, in his annals, in which having inserted the chronicle of Marianus, he says, in the year 1028, 'This year Marianus was born, a *Scot* of Ireland, by whose cares this excellent chronicle was collected.'"—LYNCH.

made no alteration in the political constitution of the country, and of course things remained in their ancient state as to the arts of civil life. *The force of this analogical reasoning cannot be resisted, it must satisfy every rational inquirer.*"

The "*rational inquirer*" who would be satisfied with these futile proofs, that there were no stone edifices in Ireland before the ninth century, must surely be an inquirer who is very easily satisfied, a credulous believer in the historical heresies of Dr. Ledwich; one that asserts without reason and concludes without experience. In Dr. Ledwich's attempt to annihilate all the Druidical temples, round towers, abbeys, and raths of Ireland, he rendered himself as silly and ridiculous as Don Quixote did in his assault on the wind-mill. The raths, according to Vallancey, Raymond, and Harris, were raised many centuries before the Christian epoch, and we believe that there is not one to be found throughout Ireland in which there is not a mural cavity of stone and lime. But Dr. Ledwich spurned the dull and tedious mode which all other antiquarians and historians have felt it an imperative duty to adopt in their inquiries, namely, historical proofs, founded on facts, authenticated by the testimony of ancient writers. He was quite indifferent about his rash assertions; it mattered not to him that he had no authority in maintaining that there were no stone edifices in Ireland, before the ninth century. With him it was quite sufficient to establish a theory that might upset, in the opinion of the credulous, all the evidences and proofs derived from history. "The Germans," says he, "had no structures of stone,—*ergo*, the Irish could have none."

Surely the writer who has to contend with such authors as Dr. Ledwich, must possess the apathy of a stoic, or be strongly impressed with the necessity of good temper in argument, when he can reply with coolness to the stupid theories of a bigoted sophist. The hypothetical theories of the ancient philosophers have been long since exploded, because it was found that the solution of natural appearances is always doubtful when founded on hypothesis. When, therefore, hypothesis, which is so often the creature of the brain, was once rejected, and the philosopher betook himself to experiments and observations, the general powers and laws of nature, which remained in obscurity for so many ages, were soon collected; but surely, however absurd hypothesis may be in physics, it is a *monster* in history.

Whenever the ancient historians affirmed an event to have taken place they quoted the authority of some other writer, unless they were themselves eye-witnesses. If they felt that a regard to truth, as deduced from appearances, imposed upon them the duty of denying it, they uniformly founded their negative conclusions on some concurring evidence: but they never argued like Dr. Ledwich, that if the ancient history of one country was involved in obscurity, that of another should be so likewise: they never maintained, on only a vantage ground of hypothesis, that if there were no stone edifices in one nation, there could be none in another. We see, then, how absurd and ridiculous it would be to make the assertion, even if there were no historical authority to prove the contrary, but where

such an absurdity is advanced in the very face of existing refutation—in the very teeth of authority, it is carrying, as Dr. Ledwich has done, bigotry to the last extreme of preposterous folly.

Yet such is the infatuation of party spirit, that every hypothesis of Dr. Ledwich has found its advocates; and even the literary world was for some time deceived, not by the imposing lustre, or ingenious sophistry that characterized his antiquities, but by the plausible misrepresentations that supported and sustained the dogmatical and unhesitating confidence with which he asserted and enforced his barefaced errors. There is no doubt but that his airy system of imposition had its Irish proselytes; and the Scotch writers, ever willing to detract from the ancient renown of their *mother country*, exerted all their talents to give currency to the opinions of a man who was hired by the British to vilify our national character, and to depreciate the ancient fame which Ireland had acquired in arts and arms. That there were stone buildings in Ireland long before the Christian era, we have, in the course of this history, distinctly proved, not by hypothesis, but by the incontrovertible testimony of many ancient writers. The inquiring historian who examines the spirit and genius of the late Dr. Ledwich's writings, will soon perceive, that the inventive, nor the creative faculty was not that which he has chiefly cultivated. His great power seems to have consisted in annihilation. Unable to create any thing of his own, he perpetually laboured to destroy the creation of others. So devoted was that heartless apostate to such a pursuit, that he could not confine himself to the destruction of imaginary existence, no, for truth, nature, reality, and reason were equally the victims of his sweeping theories.

In his book, improperly called the "*Antiquities of Ireland*," he employed all his argumentative powers in the endeavour to impress the world with the opinion that Cogitosus was a fictitious personage, because, forsooth, he had expressed his admiration of the architectiv grandeur of Ireland, in the sixth century. But Cogitosus is not the only writer who has extolled the architectiv taste and skill that prevailed at that epoch in our country. Bede, St. Bernard, and Nennius record that the architects and masons of Ireland were so eminently proficient in their art that they were employed in building the cathedral of York, in the eighth century.

Cambrensis too, who was hired by Henry II. to calumniate the character of the Irish nation, has reluctantly eulogized the paintings and sculpture with which our ancient artists enriched the cathedrals of Cashel, Limerick, Cork, Kildare, Armagh and Down.

In his Irish topography, written expressly by the orders of Henry II., that virulent defamer of Ireland says:—"I saw in the church of Kildare some fine paintings of scriptural subjects, as well as marble busts, that are ingeniously fashioned. But the greatest wonder in this church is a concordance of the four gospels. The margin is ornamented with mystic pictures, most wonderfully and animatingly finished. The writing, but particularly the capital letters, so highly embellished, that neither the pencil of an Apelles, nor the chisel of a Lysippus ever formed the like. In a word, they seem to have been executed by something more than a mortal hand."

But let us resume our historical narrative. Murtough fell a victim to a barbarous conspiracy, which was formed against him in the twenty-fourth year of his reign. He was invited to an entertainment to the palace of a chieftain, at *Mullach-Cleatach* (the hill of hedges,) near the river Boyne, in Meath: and while he was yet at the banquet table, the relentless conspirators rushed out, fastened the doors to prevent the egress of the unhappy monarch, and set the house on fire. The names of the cruel conspirators who doomed the ill-fated Murtough to such a torturing death, are not given by any of our historians.

The contemporary princes of Ireland, at this era, A. D. 527, were Fergus, king of Ulster, Cormac, king of Leinster, Eocha, king of Connaught, and Aodh, king of Munster. *Tuathal*, the grandson of Carbre, the son of Nial the Great, was elected monarch by the national estates. Whether he was implicated in the horrid conspiracy in which his predecessor was sacrificed, is a question that all our annalists have left unanswered. O'Flaherty informs us that the accession of this prince to the throne was foretold by St. Patrick, while he was an infant at his mother's breast.

CHAPTER XLVII.

The reign and death of Tuathal.—The accession of Dermot to the throne.—His reign and death.

THE history given to us of Tuathal, like that of his two immediate predecessors, is extremely scanty and barren of events. It is involved in impenetrable obscurity. We may observe, that historical notes and genealogical registers had, at this juncture, little of interest, and less of novelty, to recommend them to the literary world; for theological inquiries had opened so wide a field for the speculations of the learned, that they began to spurn that narrow compass of science to which they had been confined during the long twilight of paganism, and to this, as well as to the cause which we have already assigned, we must impute the historical dearth which impoverishes our annals during the early ages of Christianity.

The princes Fergus and Daniel, the sons of king Murtough, waged war at this time, by, we presume, the consent of the present monarch, on the Connacians, and, in a great battle which they gained at Sligo, they succeeded in killing the king of Connaught and his principal generals. We are likewise told that Earca, the son of the monarch Olioll, invaded Leinster at this period, and that, in a battle fought near Wexford, which he lost, he was killed by the hand of the Leinster king. The crown of Connaught became now the prize of competition between Cealach, the son of the late king, who had, during his father's reign, devoted himself to a monastic life, under the holy abbot Ciaran, and Guare, the son of Coleman, king of North

Munster. But no sooner had Cealach heard, in his cell, of Guare's assumption of regal power, than he abstracted himself from devotional piety, and gave way to the strong impulses of jealousy and ambition. He immediately divested himself of the humble habit of a monk, and summoned all his clans to attend his standard; nor were the partizans of his house slow in testifying their determination to support its dignity; so that he soon found himself at the head of a numerous and devoted party. But before his measures were sufficiently organized, the holy Ciaran sent to him, expressing the strongest indignation at his impiety, and threatening to pursue him with the invoked vengeance of heaven, if he did not immediately return to his cell. Cealach, who had long cherished the sweets of retirement, and enjoyed the secret raptures of religious impressions, had now to struggle between the contending emotions of nature and grace; of pride and humility; of ambition and religion. The cause of virtue, however, proved triumphant, and the repenting Cealach once more threw away the royal robes, assumed the monastic habit, and returned to his cell, where he prostrated himself before the indignant abbot, and humbly implored his forgiveness.

The sincerity of the prince's sorrow softened the abbot to compassion; he gave him his blessing and pardon; but, at the same time, prophesied that his crime could only be expiated by his suffering a violent death. The prediction was verified by the event. Tuathal was assassinated by Maol-mor, who was instigated to the atrocious deed by Dermot, the succeeding monarch, A. D. 539, in the twelfth year of his reign. The sanguinary villain received the just reward of his crime; for, when he waited on Dermot for the price of his diabolical deed, the latter caused his guards to seize him, and put him to a torturing death. Tuathal governed the nation with justice, clemency, and impartiality, during his short reign.

Contemporary with this prince were Cormoc, king of Leinster, Deman, king of Ulster, Guare, king of Connaught, Forranan, king of Thomand; and Fingin, the son of Aodh-dubh, of the Eugénian race, and ancestor of the Sept of the O'Sullivans, was king of South Munster.

Dermot, who so cruelly doomed his predecessor to assassination, was the son of Fergus Kerbal, who was the grandson of Connall, of the dynasty of Nial the Great, was elected monarch by the national estates. At his coronation he assumed the title of *Monarch of Scotia Major and Scotia Minor by the appointment of God*. In the year 541 a desperate battle was fought in the county of Cork, between the Lagenians and the Claud Breogan, with great slaughter on both sides.

Such, as we have frequently observed in the course of this history, was the romantic passion of the Milesians for military fame, that the most trifling cause often induced the different septs to appoint a time and place to determine their matter of quarrel by force of arms. The day of battle was sometimes deferred to a period of six months, while the parties met in the interim, and transacted business as usual, in the most friendly manner. The glory and honour of vic-

tory, and not the spoils of war, were alone aimed at by the chivalric combatants.

The estates of the kingdom were, at this era, 549, convened at Tara, by the present monarch, Dermot. In our history of the reign of Ollamh-Fodhla, we have detailed the ceremonies and observances which every prince and peer had to conform to, during the session of the national convention. One of the laws, enacted for the regulation of that senatorial institution, adjudged death to any person who would have the criminal temerity of striking another during the sittings of the representatives. For the first time the law was now violated by Cuarnane Mac Aodh, a prince of Connaught. This fiery youth, provoked by the insolent language of one of the representatives, struck him with his battle-axe, and killed him on the spot. Aware of the punishment due to the crime, and of the danger to which he had exposed himself, he immediately fled, for sanctuary, to Fergus and Daniel, the sons of Murtough, and besought their protection; but these princes, though willing to protect their cousin, quickly foresaw that, if they attempted to shelter him, they would only draw down the vengeance of the monarch on their head. But feeling compassion for his situation, they enabled him to escape to the monastery of St. Columb Kille, at Derry. The royal abbot, sympathising in the distress of the fugitive, readily gave him an asylum. Dermot, however, denying the right assumed by the saint, of affording sanctuary to fugitives who fled from justice, caused a strong body of guards to drag Mac Aodh from the altar, and put him to death.

St. Columb, highly incensed at the affront put upon himself and his brethren, stirred up his kinsmen, the northern Hy Nials, and his cousins, Fergus and Daniel, by whose assistance, at the head of a mighty army, he attacked the monarch, defeated him in the most signal manner, and compelled him to retreat, in disorder; with his shattered bands, to Tara. Though Dermot had involved himself in this unsuccessful war, by endeavouring to give strength and efficacy to the laws, in exercising an act, if not of moral, at least of legal justice on one of his subjects, we find him, shortly after, implicated in another, through the same cause.

Guare, king of Connaught, having deprived a religious woman of a cow, which was her only support, she, in consequence, made her complaint to the supreme sovereign, who immediately marched, with his forces, to the frontiers of Connaught, to punish the despotic Guare for his injustice. Having reached the Shannon, he found the Connacian army strongly posted on the opposite side; but, fearless of danger, and borne away by his impetuous valour, he plunged into the tide, and made good his landing, in spite of all the efforts of the enemy. A fierce battle ensued, in which the Connacians were totally defeated. Guare, however, made good his retreat, and drew up his forces, the next day, in order of battle; but, in a council of war, he was persuaded by his officers to submit to the monarch.

Dermot, after receiving the sword of his fallen enemy, treated him with every insult and indignity, in a degrading manner that showed the littleness of a vindictive mind. "He commanded him,"

says O'Halloran, "to lie on his back. He then placed one of his feet upon his breast, and thrust the point of his sword into his mouth, and then compelled him to express his sorrow for his disloyalty, and to swear fidelity and obedience to him during the residue of his life."

The cause of this, like the causes assigned for the preceding wars, savours strongly of the fabulous. To suppose that Guare, who is so highly panegyrised by our historians, for his nobleness of mind and generosity of disposition, would deprive an indigent woman of her cow, is, in our opinion, very incredible. Another story, thrown out of the loom of fiction by some adulating poet, who wove it merely to place the justness of the monarch in a more luminous point of view, is told by Keating and O'Halloran.

But let us translate Dr. Keating's version of this poetic creation :

"Prince Breasal, at this time, invited his father, the monarch, and the principal nobility then at Tara, to a banquet at his palace at Kells, in the county of Meath. To enrich this feast with every luxury, the prince was assiduous in providing prime joints of meat from all parts of the kingdom. His purveyors, however, sought in vain, amongst his numerous herds of oxen, for a beef of such extraordinary size and fatness as would come up to the *beau ideal* of the prince. But, as he was expressing his regret at their inability to procure a steer of such a description as he wanted, one of his servants told him that a recluse widow, in the neighbourhood, had in her possession the largest and fattest beast in the country. The prince, rejoiced at the information, instantly despatched one of his stewards to the widow to purchase the beef; but she, on being applied to, resolutely refused to sell it at any price; and although he even offered seven fat heifers and a bull in exchange, she still inexorably adhered to her determination of not parting with her ox. Breasal, indignant at her conduct, ordered a party of his soldiers to bring to him the steer, which they did, in despite of the cries and entreaties of the poor widow. It was cooked and served up at the banquet. The king and all the other guests of the prince expressed their admiration of the excellence of the beef; but the entertainment was scarcely over, when the weeping widow threw herself at the monarch's feet, and demanded justice and satisfaction for the spoliation of her property. Her piteous story inflamed the indignation of Dermot against the prince, his son, to the highest pitch of passion, so that in the vehemence of his choler, he ordered the unfortunate Breasal to instant death, without allowing himself to institute an inquiry into the merits of the case, or to hearken to the expostulation of the interceding nobles."

Thus we give the tale, for so we think it is, literally, as we found it in the Irish of Keating, without attaching the slightest credit to its pretended authenticity.

The restless and ambitious Guare, king of Connaught, had scarcely made peace with the monarch, when he directed his arms against the king of Munster, to recover the territories which had been wrested from his ancestor by Luigh Liamb-Dearg, in the fourth century. The king of Munster, who was aware of the intended

invasion, met Guare at Cnoc Aine, (the hill of birds,) in the county of Limerick, where Guare sustained a decisive defeat. So signal was the overthrow, that but few of his soldiers escaped from the field of battle. There were six princes, as well as the noblest chiefs of Connaught amongst the slain.

Dermod, in the twentieth year of his reign, to avenge, it is said, an insult offered to his ambassador, at the court of Ulster, invaded that province in the year 558 of the Christian era. In his progress to Armagh he devastated the country, and drove the Ultonians in consternation before him, to the borders of the county of Antrim. The Ultonians, however, under their king, Aodh Dubh, resolving to stop the career of the enemy, posted themselves in a narrow defile in the mountains, where they resolved to conquer or die. Dermod, counting on the valour of his soldiers and the enthusiasm that animated them, put himself at their head and charged, with the intention of forcing the pass. But, notwithstanding the impetuosity of the assailants, the Ultonians stood like a wall of brass. In the fury of the contest the monarch and the king of Ulster fought hand to hand, with the most determined bravery, and, after contending for an hour, like enraged giants, Dermod fell pierced with wounds. The royal army seeing the national standard lowered, which was the signal of the death of the monarch, began to retreat, having previously recovered the body of Dermod, which they carried with them to the church of Cluan Mac Noise, on the banks of the Boyne, where it was interred with funeral honours. The Ultonians were too much disabled to follow the retreating army.

O'Duvedan, a genealogical writer of the seventh century, concludes his eulogium on Dermod in the following words:—"Of all the Irish kings, this was the greatest, the most excellent, the most powerful, and the most experienced legislator." This picture has, indeed, too much of the glaring colours of poetic hyperbole.

The contemporaries of Dermod were Finghin O'Sullivan and Failbhe O'Connell, kings of South and North Munster; Fergus Mac Rosa, king of Connaught; Deman, king of Ulster; Comgall, the tributary king of the Albanian Scots; and Carbre, king of Leinster.

"It was," writes MOORE in his history, "in the reign of this monarch, (A. D. 554.) the ancient Hall or Court of Tara, in which, for so many centuries, the Triennial Councils of the nation had been held, saw, for the last time, her kings and nobles assembled within its precincts; and the cause of the desertion of this long honoured seat of legislation shows to what an enormous height the power of the ecclesiastical order had then risen. Some fugitive criminal, who had fled for sanctuary to the monastery of St. Ruan, having been dragged forcibly from thence to Tara, and there put to death, the holy abbot and his monks cried aloud against the sacrilegious violation; and proceeding in solemn procession to the Palace, pronounced a curse upon its walls. 'From that day,' say the annalists, 'no king ever sat again at Tara;' and a poet who wrote about that period, while mourning evidently over the fall of this seat of grandeur, ventures but to say, 'It is not with my will that Teamor is

deserted.* A striking memorial of the church's triumph on the occasion, was preserved in the name of distinction given to the monastery,† which was, ever after, in memory of this malediction, called 'The Monastery of the Curses of Ireland.' "

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Fergus and Daniel ascend the throne.—Their reign.—Accession and reign of Achy—of Carbre Croman—of Ainmeric—of Badan—and of Hugh.—The events of Hugh's reign, and his death.

THE death of Dermot called forth many candidates for the vacant throne. We have shown, in the last chapter, that Fergus and Daniel, the sons of the monarch, Murtough, were powerful princes, who had distinguished themselves by their valour and success in the invasion of Connaught. On the present occasion they had on foot a large army to back their pretensions to the monarchy.

The national representatives assembled at Tara, A. D. 559, and, after a short deliberation, elected Fergus and Daniel joint monarchs of Ireland. As soon as they had mounted the throne they despatched ambassadors to the king of Leinster, to inform him, that, unless he caused the balance of the *Boroihme*, or tribute, to be promptly paid to them, on their arrival, that the kings, with the royal army, would invade his territories, and enforce the payment of the impost. The Leinster king, far from complying with the arrogant requisition, placed himself at the head of his forces, and marched to the frontiers to meet the invading foe. The belligerents came to battle at Iniver More, Arklow,‡ and after a brave resistance, the Lagenians were decisively defeated.

* Irish Hymn, attributed to Fiech, a disciple of St. Patrick, but evidently, from this allusion to the desertion of Tara, written at least as late as the time of King Diarmid.

† Annal. Ulton. ad ann. 564, note.

‡ Arklow, a neat, thriving seaport town in the county of Wicklow, seated on the beautifully wooded banks of the charming river Avoca, at the distance of fifty miles S. E. from Dublin, abounds with antique monuments of historical recollections. Its ruins are impressive, solemn, and affecting. The white houses, at a distance, appear to rise on each side of this classic stream, whose banks are finely fringed with venerable oaks, like druidical priestesses, in their snowy robes, as if ascending to temples on the impending summits. From the noble bridge, of nineteen arches, which crosses the Avoca, the traveller beholds, on one side, the pelucid bay reflecting the blue sky, and on the other, the bold acclivities, studded with giant oaks, and wreathed with shrubs and grassy fillets of the softest verdure. Bishop Pococke, the celebrated author of *Travels in the East*, was delighted with the romantic and magnificent scenery of Arklow. In his remarks on it he says, "This is a most charming place, that possesses all that is desirable in landscape scenery. The ruins of castles and abbeys embosomed in groves, and skirted by modern residences, bestow the interest of contrast on the lively scene. This 'seaborn' town, with its noble bay and golden sands, verdant steeps and winding glens, when viewed from the promontory, where the prospect brings all the groupings of the landscape under the eye, presents a striking resemblance to the hill of

The reign of these victorious kings, who are so extolled for martial genius and daring, was short, but brilliant; and although one year terminated it, yet it was as eventful and memorable as if it had lasted half a century. We marvel, indeed, why our annalists do not inform us more particularly of the events of this reign. We are likewise left in the dark as to the cause of their death; for, whether they suffered as the victims of conspiracy, or fell in the field of battle, or, what is more unlikely, died a natural death, is a question that can never be satisfactorily answered. Dr. Warner, we do not know on what authority, says, that during their short but glorious reign, they fought the king of Munster, who brought into the field the strength of the entire province, and completely defeated him, and compelled him to pay tribute, and send them hostages.*

As we cannot find this battle spoken of by any other writer, save Dr. Warner, and Mr. Wyne, who probably follows his authority, we are inclined to think he has mistaken it for the battle of Arklow, in which the monarchs triumphed over the Lagenians, and in consequence, exacted, as conquerors, the Leinster tribute. The battle of Arklow is spoken of by all our historians. Keating, O'Halloran, M'Geoghegan, Cummerford, O'Flaherty, and M'Dermott concur in their accounts of it. The latter writer is of opinion, that Fergus and Daniel fell in an engagement near Cashel, in the county of Tipperary.

Achy, the son of Daniel, succeeded his father and uncle, A. D. 560, associating with him on the throne, his father's youngest brother, Badan. But they were not suffered to hold the sceptre longer than three years. Carbre Croman, an aspiring prince, the son of Tigernach, of their own dynasty, attacked the joint sovereigns, and succeeded in vanquishing and depriving them of life, in the battle of Glengivin, in Meath. Carbre was scarcely seated on the throne, when Coleman, the son of king Dermot instigated an insurrection against him. In the battle which took place in consequence, both antagonists died of their wounds.

Ainmeric, of the house of Nial the Great, and grandson of Fergus, was elected monarch, A. D. 563. In the third year of his reign he was defeated and killed, in the battle of Careg Leime-an Eich, by his cousin Fergus Hy-Nial. Ainmeric was a very pious prince, much devoted to religion, and scrupulously observant of its rights and discipline.

Mount Sion, at Jerusalem." The house and domain of Lord Wicklow impart grace, beauty, and cheerfulness to the environs of Arklow. The abbey was founded in 1264, by Theobald Butler, whose statue, of white marble, stands in the choir of the parish church. The castle, which crowns an eminence overlooking the river, once the feudal residence of the O'Byrnes, was battered and dilapidated by Cromwell's soldiers. A fierce and sanguinary battle was fought in the vicinity of this town, on the 7th of June, 1798, between the Armagh, Cavan, and North Cork militia, as well as the Durham fencibles, under the command of General Needham, and the Irish Republicans, led on by the brave but unfortunate enthusiast, the Rev. Michael Murphy, who fell gallantly fighting, like one of his Milesian ancestors, in the engagement.

* "Whether the two monarchs were mortally wounded in this engagement, which is not improbable, or whether they fell by a natural death, is uncertain: we are only told that they both died soon after."—WARNER.

Badan, cousin-german of the late monarch, succeeded A. D. 566; but his reign was terminated in a year. He invaded Connaught, and was killed at the battle of Bagha, in the county of Leitrim. We are told by our annalists that Badan was defeated in the first year of his reign, and obliged to take shelter in St. Columb's monastery, at Derry, whence he was dragged by his revolted subjects, and put to death.

Aodh, or Hugh, the son of Ainmeric, succeeded A. D. 576. This prince is represented to have been pious and valiant, and extremely liberal in his donations to the church. He granted the territory of Doire, now Derry,* to St. Columb Kille, on which that famous saint founded a monastery, celebrated during his life and for many ages after, for the number, piety, and learning of its monks.

Hugh was not permitted long to hold his sceptre in peace or comfort. He, in the beginning of his reign, was attacked by Colman, the son of Dermot, the former monarch, who aspired to the throne. The contending competitors for empire fought a battle at Dathi, in Meath, which was heroically disputed on both sides; but at length the monarch proved victorious after killing his adversary and five thousand of his best troops, in the field. During this reign, according to Bishop Usher, Aidanus, of the house of O'Donnel, was consecrated by his uncle, St. Columb Kille, King of the Albanian Scots, in the Isle of Sky.

The reign of Hugh is distinguished in our annals, in consequence of his having, at this era, convened a congress of the national estates at *Drumkeat*, (the Eminence of the Plough,) in Meath. The monarch had three principal objects in view in calling this meeting: the first was to repress the pride and insolence of the bards and antiquarians, who, not only from their numbers, but also from their immunities, became a burden on the state.† The second, to enforce

* Londonderry, the ancient patrimony of the O'Dougherties, called in Irish *Daire Calgac*, (the Vale of Oaks,) is the scene of historical events, and the site of venerable monuments of antiquity. That city is beautifully situated on a peninsula eminence at the narrow part of Lough Foyle, at the distance of a hundred and fifty English miles from Dublin. It is a very flourishing city, admirably and advantageously situated for commerce. When James I. confiscated the estates of the O'Neils, O'Donnells, and O'Dougherties, he seized on upwards of half a million of acres of the lands of these proscribed and persecuted noblemen, two thousand acres of which he sold to London adventurers in 1607; hence the name *Londonderry*. The streets are regular and well paved, and the houses, which are built of polished freestone, have a pleasing appearance.

The Abbey, dedicated to St. Peter and Paul, was erected by St. Columb Kille, (the Dove of the Church,) in the year 545.

Prince Turlogh O'Niel built another abbey, for nuns of the Cesterian order here, in 1218, and a Dominican Friary was founded on the north side of the city, by O'Donnel, prince of Tyrconnel, in the year 1274. There is not a trace of the monastery to be seen. The cathedral, a noble pile of Gothic architecture, is in fine repair. This episcopal edifice was originally founded by St. Congall, the son of the king of Leinster, about the year 613. In 1150 Mureach O'Coffy, the then bishop, enlarged and beautified the cathedral. It was consumed by fire in 1151, but, by the munificence of Maurice M'Loughlin, King of Ireland, it was soon rebuilt, in more than its pristine magnificence of architecture.

† Poets being increased to a prodigious number, and becoming a grievance to the people, from the charge they were at to support them. Hugh was determined to put them under another regulation, or else to expel them out of the kingdom. Indeed, if the account is to be credited that, because of the ease and idleness

the payment of the tribute that Nial the Great had imposed on the Dalriadan colony of Scotland, which they had not paid for some time; and thirdly, to deprive Scanlan More of the government of Ossory, and to transfer it to his son Jollan. It would seem that the monarch could have conferred the government of Ossory on Jollan without consulting the national estates, as he had imprisoned his father, Scanlan, and consequently had nothing to fear from the consequences of promoting the son to the power which he had wrested from the father with impunity.

Why this assembly was held at Drumkeat, and not at Tara, as was customary, we are not informed by the Irish historians; but, whatever may have been the cause, it was not inferior in pomp and splendour to any of the former conventions. All the princes of Ireland, Albany, and the Isle of Man were summoned to attend. St. Columb Kille alone, though perhaps next to the king, on account of the profound esteem and reverence in which he was held by the Irish people, was not invited to this convocation of princes and nobles. It is certain, however, that if St. Columb was not summoned from his monastery of Iona, in the Hebrides of Scotland, where he was now a resident, it did not, we think, arise from either enmity or jealousy on the part of the king, as he was particularly attached to the saint, and bestowed on him, as we have already stated, the territory of Derry, to erect a monastery and church on it. The saint having the most powerful influence over the minds of the Albanians and Picts, among whom he was then preaching the gospel, Hugh might have thought his presence in the country necessary to prevent a defection from the mother country. The monarch was perhaps, influenced by another reason in not inviting St. Columb to the assembly:—he knew that his mission to the Picts was in performance of a penance imposed upon him by St. Molaise, for the wars and civil broils which he had excited by his violent temper, as we have related in the last chapter, and that he had bound him, by a solemn promise, that he never was to set his eyes on the scenes or soil of his native land; so that it would be an insult offered to the royal saint to invite him to a congress, where he could not appear without violating his vow.

The poets, adopting every plan to avert the militant consequences that menaced their body, sent a special mission to St. Columb, their chief laureate, imploring him to attend the convocation, and to exert his influence and eloquence in their behalf. This solicitation of the bards, as well as the deep interest which the saint took in the temporal and spiritual advantages of his adopted country, operated powerfully on his feelings, and produced the determination of revisiting his native land. But to fulfil, at the same time, the obligations of his vow, and carry his resolution of pleading before the assembly for the bards and the cause of the poets, he covered his eyes with a sear cloth, and, hoodwinked thus, was conducted to the general congress, attended by twenty bishops, forty priests, and fifty deacons.

enjoyed by this profession—for there a profession it was—and of the great immunities annexed to it by the ancient laws of the land, the resolution of the monarch seems wise and necessary.”—WARNER.

That an abbot should have priests, deacons, and even bishops in his train, would appear doubtful, if not supported by the most respectable authority—that of the venerable Bede, who had the best opportunity of knowing whatever belonged to ecclesiastical subjects in the British Isles. The great historian of the ecclesiastical affairs of Britain says, “*It was usual in this island, (Iona,) to have an abbot for its governor, who was a priest to whom not only the entire province, but even the bishops themselves, by an extraordinary decree, were subject, following herein the example of its first doctor and teacher, who was not a bishop, but a priest and a monk.*” But it is obvious that, even if Columb had not precedence of the bishops by any ecclesiastical institute, gratitude alone, for the spiritual blessings which their country derived from his apostolic labours, and their knowledge of his illustrious birth, would have induced them to give him, in consideration of these causes, and of his superior talents, that priority of rank to which his priestly dignity did not entitle him.

We may judge of the importance of the debates which took place in this memorable convention, from its having remained in session fourteen months, a term much longer than any former sitting. In this regal, princely, and noble assembly, we find the following names enumerated: Criomthan, king of Leinster; Jollan, king of Ossory; Maodium, king of West Munster; Guare, son of Coleman, king of North and South Munster; Fingin, or Florence, son of Hugh Dubh, king of East Munster; Criomthan, king of West Ireland; Ragallach, son of Udach, king of Tuatha; and Breffeny O’Rourke and Conquill Cearnach, kings of Urial; Congallach, prince of Tirconnel; and Fearguil, king of Leinster.

CHAPTER XLIX.

St. Columba pleads for the bards before the National Assembly, and procures an acknowledgment of the independence of the Albanian Scots.—Death of the monarch Aodh.—His contemporaries.—Biography of St. Columb Kille.

THE news of the approach of St. Columba inspired the bards with cheering hopes, while it depressed and damped the expectations of the monarch and his ministers, who foresaw that the eloquence and influence of the saint would frustrate all the measures which they had designed for enactment in the present convention.

Keating relates that when the queen, who for some cause of which we are not informed, was very inimical to the holy man, was apprised of his arrival in the vicinity of the senate house, with a numerous train of ecclesiastics, she induced her son Connell to collect a rude mob, who not only loaded the venerable abbot with every species of the most insulting and opprobrious contumely, but pelted him and his followers with mud. The saint bore this gross usage with meekness and resignation, and proceeded to the senate house amidst a

shower of filth and missiles. On entering the hall, the monarch, provincial princes, and national representatives rose simultaneously to salute him. His cousin, O'Niel, king of Ulster, caused the Saint to take a seat on his throne, and his retinue to occupy chairs of state adjoining it.

St. Columba, without uttering a word of complaint of the rudeness he and his followers experienced from Prince Connell, commenced speaking on the subjects of debate. In the exordium of his speech he expressed his regret for the war he had fomented; admitted the justness of the penance that had been imposed upon him, and declared that nothing else than the sincere desire of warding off the blow which menaced the existence of the bardic order, and a wish to exempt the Dalriadan colony, as well as their subjects, the Caledonians, from the tribute which they owed to the Irish crown, could have induced him to visit the land of his birth. He then gave a narrative of the success of his mission, in converting all the inhabitants of Scotland to the Christian creed.

Passing from these subjects, he entered into the discussion by labouring, with great force of eloquence, to impress the assembly with feelings of compassion towards the bards and antiquarians. He urgently represented to the convention, that it would be more prudent, glorious, and beneficial to the state, to diminish the number of the "sons of song and story," than to suppress altogether a body of men whose genius celebrated virtue, and immortalized the deeds of the valiant and the wise. "If," said he, "you exile the poets, who will transmit the fame of the brave in arms to posterity? what greater incentive can inflame the breast of the patriotic warrior, in defence of his country, than the certainty that his exploits will live in song, and that his name shall be glorified in the lasting monuments of genius? To merit the eulogium of the poet has ever been the passion and ambition of our greatest heroes and legislators. To whom, then, O monarch of Erin, and exalted princes of Inisfail, is our country indebted for her illustrious renown in arms, in arts, and in letters? Surely ye will all say, 'To the poets!' Their soft or sublime effusions, which powerfully touched the passions of the brave and the generous, while they made the heart of the fiercest warrior glow with emotions of tenderness and love, often animated and roused a Tuathal, a Cormac, or a Nial, with resistless energy of spirit, to the combat of heroes. These great conquerors, while preparing for the strife of shields, and enjoying the delightful rapture—the ethereal pleasure, which the combined powers of music and poetry create, felt that the song of the bard, which is not only the source of melting joy, but of noble and heroic exertion, owed its origin to that invisible power, whose influence seemed to hallow and animate the mind of the inspired poet. I think that poetry is not yet degenerated among us, nor that inspiration is extinct in our poetic productions. Our present bards, like those of other times, consecrate their genius to the ennobling task of celebrating the praises of heroes; of forming and elevating the virtues of the living, by applauding those of the dead. Yes, sire, and princes, if you banish the poets you will undermine the proud fabric of our litera-

ture, paralyze the martial spirit of the country, and sink the character of the nation low in the scale of moral and intellectual attainment. Oh! then, let me implore this regal and princely assembly to pause ere they prostrate the literary glory of their country—ere they extinguish the refulgence of the muses, and benight Ireland, the foster-mother of poetry, piety, and learning, in the gloom of ignorance. This is the last time that I shall address ye, most regal and princely sages! but, before I bid an eternal adieu to the country of my birth—of my sovereign fathers; a country, oh, misery unutterable! in which my crimes deny to me a grave, let me, the descendant of Nial the Great, conjure and supplicate this august convention to retain and preserve a portion of the bards, to not only illuminate our country with the radiance of genius,—but to relinquish the right of, and release the Caledonian colonists, who will ever acknowledge their feudal obedience to Ireland, from the tribute for which they are bound to the monarch of Ireland.”*

At this epoch it was an evil peculiar to the Irish poets to have many dependents, who were glad of enlisting under their banners, from the immunities they then enjoyed, and the respect which was paid to them. The saint, therefore, in the course of his speech, advised the convention to limit the students in the different colleges, and to check the insolence of those who, without being regularly educated, or possessing the gifts of genius, wished to appear in the train of the poets, and to wear the borrowed livery of the legitimate sons of inspiration.

The speech of St. Columba enlisted the sympathies of the convocation in the cause he advocated. His representations were eminently successful. The convention resolved, that thenceforth the monarch's chief bard was to be president of all the poetic colleges

* The speech of St. Columba in the text we have translated from Molloy: it never appeared before in an English dress. O'Flaherty alludes to it, and says, "St. Columba's speech at the great parliament, breathed the eloquence of inspiration; it effected great purposes, the retention of the Irish bards, and the release of the Caledonians and Picts from the Irish tribute. The speech is preserved in the book of Donegal, and thence copied into the compilation of the Four Masters." How often have we, since we commenced writing a history of Ireland, been provoked and mortified in hearing men utterly ignorant of the history of their country, exclaim, "Oh, we have read Keating, and O'Halloran, and they have given us all we *want to know* of Ireland." Now we could swear on the rubric that not one of the men who used this language could tell, if he were asked, "whether was Heremon the Son or the Father of Milesius? Whether Nial the Great, and Con of the hundred battles, were contemporaries; whether Fion *Mac Cumhal* and *Ossian* were brothers?" But in this fate we are not singular. Men of narrow understanding, and contracted intellect, are not able to discriminate between compilation and originality. They think, that, because we take the frame work of our history from O'Flaherty, Keating, O'Halloran, Cumerford, and O'Connor, that we are not entitled to any credit for the drapery of thought, the embellishment of the language, and the blazonery of research, with which we decorate the barren facts of our predecessors.

We owe no more to those historians who have preceded us than Robertson owes to Fordun and Buchanan, than Gibbon owes to Tacitus, or that Lingard owes to Bede and Clarendon. All we will say of our history of Ireland, is that the language and sentiment of the narrative are original, and that we have illustrated it with several translations, and extended the discoveries of research far beyond the land-marks set up by Keating and O'Halloran. This we predict will be yet admitted by every candid critic who is versed in the philosophy of Irish history.

in the kingdom ; that he should have the power of appointing inspectors to examine the state of the different schools, and to enact such regulations as he deemed best suited to give efficacy to this restricting law. It was also, at the same time enacted, that the monarch, the provincial sovereigns, and minor chieftains should each retain a poet, to record the exploits and preserve the genealogies of his family ; and a salary was to be allowed to them, adequate to support them with suitable respectability. As a compensation to the state for their immunities and salaries, they were obliged to instruct the youth of several districts, in history, poetry, and antiquities. The revenues intended for their support were exempted, as usual, from tax and plunder ; their persons were inviolable ; and exclusive of their settled annuities, they were to be paid for each poem, according to its merit, by their particular patrons.

The second object of the meeting being to impose a tax on the Dalriada of Albania, the king urged the measure with as much energy, as the saint opposed it. The eloquence of the royal abbot triumphed over the suggestions of the sovereign. The law authorizing the exaction of the impost was abrogated, and the Albanian Scots were declared the allies and friends of Ireland, and exonerated from all kinds of tribute, except in cases of murder and spoliation, when they were bound to make reparation to the friends of the deceased as well as to the injured person.

The saint having thus effected his purposes, took his leave of the monarch and assembly, and set out on his journey to Albania ; but on his way home, he visited *Scanlan More* the deposed king of Ossory, whom he liberated from the trammels of a prison, having succeeded, while at the convention, in obtaining his pardon from the monarch.

Shortly after the dissolution of the convocation of Drumceat, Connell, the eldest son of Aodh, invaded the territories of Colman Bemhidh, but his army was defeated and himself slain in the field of battle. At this juncture, A. D. 594, Aodh embodied a great military force with which he invaded Leinster to enforce the payment of a tribute which had been the cause of so many former wars. The people of Leinster flew to arms on his approach and gave him battle in the vicinity of the town of Swords, near the city of Dublin, where they totally vanquished his troops, and slew himself. Aodh, or Hugh, was a prince of amiable private qualities, but he wished to exercise the arbitrary sway of an absolute monarch. During his reign, which lasted twenty-four years, the country enjoyed repose and prosperity.

The reigning Princes in Ireland, at the period of Hugh's death, were Dioma, king of Munster, Colman More, king of Leinster, Maolcatch, king of Connaught, and Congall, the son of Gabhran, ruled the Picts in Albany.

As the life of St. Columb Kille embraced great historical events, and as his genius and piety reflected lustre on the fame of his country, we will weave a biographical sketch of him, in our history of Ireland.

This renounced saint, who, to use the language of Dr. Johnson,

first "preached the Gospel of Christ to the roving clans and rude barbarians of ancient Caledonia," was the son of Feidlim, the son of Fergus, the son of Connell (from whom Tirconnell derives its name) the son of Nial the Great. He was born in *Gartown*, in the county of Donegal, on the 9th of June, in the year 519. His mother, Eitha, like his father, was of the blood royal of Ireland; she was the daughter of Deema, a prince of Leinster, and the direct descendant of *Carbre Liffichaire*, the monarch of Ireland, in the third century. Immediately after his birth, his mother bore him to the cell of *Cruachan* a learned and pious monk, who baptized him by the name of *Criomthan O'Cuin*. At seven years of age after leaving the nursery, his parents placed him under the instruction of the hermit *Cruachan*. This anchorite bestowed the greatest care, and the most assiduous attention on the education of his noble pupil. He made so rapid a progress in his studies under the tutorage of the hermit, that, on the attainment of his tenth year, he was a proficient in Greek and Latin classics, while with these acquisitions he possessed a comprehensive knowledge of the holy Scriptures, as well as of the histories of the saints and martyrs of the Christian church. His person was robust, but graceful, and his face presented the expression of mildness and gentleness of disposition. Like many other personages, destined to soar to eminence in the world our saint's birth, we are informed by Colgan, and Keating, was preceded by some extraordinary omens. Saint Patrick, and his successor *Maveth*, predicted the sanctity and distinction which should immortalize the Life of Columba, and the glory that he should acquire in converting Caledonia to Christianity. His mother too, while pregnant with the saint, dreamed, one night, that an uncommon personage, whose figure and mien bespoke him more than mortal, had presented her with a spangled veil of the most varying and vivid hues, but that while she was yet gazing on its beauties with admiration, he snatched it out of her hands, and then raising and expanding it in the breeze, it flew up to heaven in such amplitude of distention that it concealed, like a drapery, the whole concave of the horizon. Perceiving that what she so lately possessed, was irretrievably lost, she burst out in tears of sorrow, when the angel moved by her wailings, thus addressed her: "Fair and faithful daughter of kings, dry up the tears of thy anguish, for the veil you have lost is but the emblem of that child to whom you will soon give birth, and who is destined and ordained to be one of the prophets of God. His name shall be immortal, and his piety and eloquence shall lead myriads of souls to heaven." This dream made a deep impression on the mother of Columba, who, the moment he was born, devoted him by a vow to the church; and consequently his education was such as might qualify him for the sacred office he was to fill.*

After the saint had studied literature, science, and theology under the learned preceptor, *Cruachan*, he was removed to the school of the celebrated *St. Finian*, in *Downpatrick*. It was at this school

* The description of the dream of Columba Kille's mother we have translated from "*Flemming's Miscellanies*."

he received the name of Columb, from his fellow-students, because of the dove-like innocence of his behaviour, the amiableness of his manners, and the beauty of his person. St. Finian, perceiving how applicable the term thus instinctively applied to the youth was to his personal and mental endowments, believed it was the will of heaven that he should be so called, and he never after accosted him by his original name, Criomthan.

When St. Finian became bishop of the see, and head of the famed college of Clonard,* in Meath, his disciple, St. Columba, accompanied him thither.

"St. Finian," says Ware, "was the first bishop of Clonard, and a famous philosopher and divine. He was of a noble family, but much more ennobled by his piety, at St. *David's*, in Wales, where he was deeply beloved of the bishop of that place, with whom he sometimes sojourned. Upon his return home he was made a bishop, and fixed his see at Clonard, in Meath, near the river Boyne, where he also erected a famous college, which, by his great care and labours, bred many famous, holy and learned men, some of whom were the two Kierans, the two Brendans, the two Columbs. He died on the 12th of December, 552, and was buried under the altar of his own church."

CHAPTER L.

Biography of St. Columba, Continued.

OUR Saint continued five years at the celebrated college of Clonard, where, like a diligent Bee, he sipped the honey of poetry, literature, science, and divinity from the lessons of St. Finian, and the other professors of the "*Great school of the West*," as Bede designated the University of Clonard. His education being thus completed, his venerable master bestowed on him the order of Priesthood. The discipline established in the college of Clonard, by St. Finian, for the probation of candidates for holy orders, were trying and severe. On the entrance of the young student into the house, he was received with parental tenderness, and the most gentle means were adopted to fire his mind with emulation, and a desire for distinguishing himself in piety, literature, and philosophy. At the end of a year after his admission, "he was," says the vene-

* Clonard, situated thirty-five miles N. W. of Dublin, in the county of Meath, though now a hamlet village, was once an episcopal city, possessing a university where, in the latter end of the sixth century, more than five thousand students received at a time, their education. The first abbey was founded there by St. Finian, who was of royal lineage and the most learned philosopher of his day. This renowned saint died of the plague, in December, 552, on which day his festival is celebrated. The tomb of the Dillon family still stands in high preservation in the abbey. The Delacies founded a monastery here in 1190.

rable and profound BISHOP BURKE,* "ordered to build a small cell near the college, with his own hands for his oratory. Here the student watched, prayed, studied, and slept. By day he was to assemble with his school-fellows, and enter into an emulous trial of mental competition with them. Thus were all in a state of activity, rivalling each other in their exertions to arrive at evangelical perfection,—and contemptuous of worldly magnificence, there was no room for cabal—no subject for discontent—for when disengaged from their studies, the youth were necessitated to work for their sustenance with their own hands."

From the illustrious College of Clonard, (the lovely hill) where many French and Spanish princes received their education during the sixth and seventh centuries, issued a brilliant array of learning and sanctity. The two St. Kierans, the two Columbas, as well as the Saints Brandons, Lasserius, Muachas, Ruadan, with a numerous host of talented and holy men, whose genius reflected lustre on their country's fame, by the eminent exercise of their piety, learning and capacity, in foreign climes.

In 543, he took leave of his kind patron St. Finian, and set out on a missionary tour through Ireland, in order to build churches, preach the sublime truths of the Gospel, and found monasteries in such parts of the country as required them.

To enumerate all the churches and monasteries built by our saint, would require the space of a volume. He was on the retreat, engaged in prayer and penance in his abbey at Derry, when king Dermot, as we have already recorded in a former chapter, violated the right of sanctuary with which the edifice was invested, and thereby incurred the resentment of the saint, who led forth his

* The Right Rev. Dr. Thomas Burke, has contributed so vast a fund of antiquarian research and acute illustrations to our annals, that we shall, as a debt of gratitude for the information we derive from his writings, in a future number, pay a biographical tribute to his memory. He was a native of Dublin, where he was born in 1710. At the age of fifteen, his father sent him to Rome, to study divinity under his maternal uncle, Rev. James Fitzgerald, then prior of the convent of St. Sixtus and Clement. In Rome his learning and eloquence procured for him the favourable notice of Pope Benedict XIII. He was advanced by his Holiness, to the highest theological honours, and promoted in 1759, to the see of Ossory. This exalted station, so justly due to his talents, erudition, piety, benevolence, and other exemplary virtues, he did not enjoy many years, for he died in Kilkenny, in September, 1776. His excellent work, entitled, "*Hibernicæ Dominicanæ*," is a gigantic pile of intellect, research, and historical inquiry. He devoted a volume of this celebrated work to the history of Ireland, from the English invasion, to the year 1772, including a comprehensive account of all the abbeys and convents which were erected in the country, from the days of St. Patrick down to the present day. This valuable book, without which there would have been a chasm in the history of our country, was denounced in the Irish parliament in 1775, as a seditious publication. The Lord Lieutenant offered a reward for the discovery of the author, and called, *ex officio*, upon the Roman Catholic prelates to pass sentence of reprobation "against a book that was calculated to fill the public mind with alarm, and to sow the seeds of disunion among the Irish people."

Seven Catholic prelates, accordingly, at a synod held in Thurles, passed an interdict against the *Hibernicæ Dominicanæ*. But those Bishops were forced by the sword of terror held over their heads, by a despotic government in the reign of barbarous intolerance, to act as they did. The names of the prelates appended to the interdict were James Butler, James Keefe, William Egan, Francis Moylan, Daniel Kearney, John Butler, and Matthew M'Kenna.

kindred, the O'Donnells, and O'Niels, against the despotic and impious monarch, and completely routed him and his army.

Before the period of this discomfiture of the royal army, the saint incurred the displeasure of the king and his courtiers, by his bold exposure of the vices of royalty, and of its sycophantic satellites, among whom were many of the clergy themselves. His denunciations and anathemas were launched against them with a tremendous power of eloquence. These had the most salutary and moral effects—they terrified the provincial princes into mildness and justice, and induced them to adopt a more element and equitable system of government, and to act more conformably to the benign spirit of the Christian dispensation.

“Such among the clergy,” writes Colgan, “as were precipitate, or prone to worldly affairs, he soon curbed—such as were indolent he roused—such as were addicted to luxury, he severely reprimanded—the weak and the wavering he strengthened—the vicious he reformed. In short, the oppressed he abetted—the haughty he humbled, and the vicious he repressed.”

How could such a rigid, moral censor as this, escape the malice and revenge of the persons against whom he hurled the shafts of reproof? The princes and priests whom he reprobated, exerted all their influence against him, and gained so far their object, as to have him unjustly excommunicated. But he was not long a sufferer under the anathema which was procured by a conspiracy of princes and priests.

A synod was held in Birr, in the King's county, of all the principal clergy of Ireland, in 544, to which our saint repaired, in order to vindicate his character from the odium which the malignity of his enemies had heaped upon it.

When he approached the hall of deliberation, St. Brendan rose from his seat, and advanced to embrace him. All the clergy present, indicated their astonishment at this act of condescension to an excommunicated person. As soon as St. Brendan conducted Columba to a seat, he observed to the elders—“Do not wonder at this deference to a personage of such sanctity and learning as St. Columb-Kille. His tears, remorse, and repentance, have blotted out his transgressions from the anger of God. Had Jesus vouchsafed to manifest to you, venerable fathers, what he has revealed to me, you would not have dishonoured the man whom the Almighty has preordained to fill the folds of religion and grace with flocks of the faithful. Behold! the royal prophet, and the glorified saint, who is to conduct the whole Heathen people of Albania unto the paradise of eternal salvation!”

Columb-Kille then proceeded to extenuate his conduct; but in the course of his speech, he expressed his sincere sorrow for the bloodshed and commotions which his choleric passion gave birth to; pledging himself at the same time, to submit to any penance the synod might think proper to impose upon him for his transgressions.

No sooner had he expressed his contrition for what had happened, than the entire assembly simultaneously rose to greet him. The saints, Finian and Molaise, after a short consultation told our saint

that the penance he would have to perform, in order to atone for his sins, was, that he must in foreign climes, by preaching piety and sanctity, bring as many souls into the church of Christ, as those which the war he fomented and occasioned had hurried, perhaps unprepared, before the tribunal of heaven. As soon as this was announced to him, he with a joyful heart replied—"This penance is so just and equitable that I shall cheerfully undertake it, in the hope that God will forgive my sins and enable me to satisfy him by my performance of it."

The conduct of our saint furnishes a notable instance of the progress of the soul, from weakness to strength—from frailty to perfection. The violence of his temper and the stubborn unbending spirit that led him to excite war and civil commotions now sink in in the serene sanctity of the repenting saint. The facility with which he submitted to his sentence—a sentence that expatriated him from the land of his nativity, over which his parents and relatives held sovereign sway, exemplifies the characteristic virtues of the primitive Divines of Ireland. What a noble example of self-denial and resignation has our royal saint exhibited in this instance.

Had he not divested himself of the coil of the passions and listened to the admonitions of conscience, he might have set the decrees of the synod of Birr at defiance; for the O'Neils, O'Donnells, McLoughlins and Kinsellaghs, the most powerful regal sept, and all his blood relations in Ireland, were burning with ardour and impatience to avenge the wrongs under which they thought the holy man had unjustly suffered. His exile, therefore, though caused by a public ecclesiastical censure, must be still considered as a voluntary act arising from a conviction that he had merited to the fullest extent, the severity of this reproof and the punishment annexed to it. Conscious of the evils that almost invariably result from an ardent and passionate temper, when connected with power, and yielding to the influence of returning grace, that divine emanation of the soul that not only renders us sensible of our faults, but prompts us to atone for them, he passed over to Scotland, where he devoted the remainder of his life to the conversion and civilization of a people who were then, comparatively, as DR. JOHNSON has verified, engulfed in gross barbarism.

The obligations, however, which the Christian religion owes to Columba, must not be estimated by the numerous converts that he and his immediate disciples brought over to the Christian church. To him must also be attributed in a great measure the conversions effected by his disciples and successors.

He it was, that inspired them with that fervent sanctity and apostolic perseverance, which crowned their ministry with a success unexampled in the age in which they flourished. In addition to the testimony of Bede to the learning, eloquence, and zeal of the followers and successors of the brilliant luminary of the Irish church, we feel proud of adducing the corroborating evidence given by the ablest and most philosophic of living historians (DR. LINGARD) in his history of the *Anglo Saxon church*. "From the monastery of St. Columba at Iona, came Aidan, the successful apostle of Northumbria.

During the course of his labours, the missionary kept his thoughts fixed on his patron and countryman, St. Columb-Kille, and after his example requested permission to retire from the Court and fix his residence in some lonely island, where his devotions might not be interrupted by the follies and vices of men. His petition was granted. Lindins Farn, at a small distance from the Northumbrian coast, was peopled with a colony of Irish Monks. The successors of Aidan rapidly extended the monastic institute throughout the kingdom of Bernicia, and Deira Mercia, and east Anglia. Bede, in different parts of his works, has borne the most honourable testimony to their virtue—with a glowing pencil he displays their patience, their chastity, their frequent meditation on the sacred writings, and their indefatigable efforts to attain the summit of Christian perfection.

They chose for their habitation the most dreary situations: no motives but those of charity could draw them from their cells: and if they appeared in public their object was to reconcile enemies, to instruct the ignorant, to discourage vice, and to plead the cause of the unfortunate. The little property which they enjoyed was common to all—poverty they esteemed as the surest guardian of virtue, and the benefactions of the opulent they respectfully declined, or instantly employed in relieving the distress of the indigent. One only stain did Bede discover in their character, an immoderate esteem for their Milesian forefathers—which prompted them to prefer their own customs to the consent of all other Christian churches; “but this, he piously trusted, would disappear in the bright effulgence of their virtues.”

But let us return to the synod of Birr, and the departure of St. Columba on his mission to Caledonia. The saints and fathers at this clerical convocation, after giving their blessing to Columba, also consented that he should be assisted in his mission by twelve erudite and pious ecclesiastics whom he had nominated for their approval. The names of these saintly missionaries or *Culdees** are recorded by

* Various and ridiculous are the opinions of the Scottish writers respecting the derivation of the term *Culdee*. Our countryman, the learned Toland, in his history of the Druids, deduces the name from *Keille De*, which imports in Irish, the consorts of God. Dr. Shaw contends its proper etymology is *Keil De*, or the servants of God. Bishop Nicholson says that its derivation is found in the *Cool dubh*, or the *black hood*. But though these celebrated antiquarians were very able Greek and Latin scholars they were but indifferent Etymologists. The late REV. PAUL O'BRIEN, who was Professor of the Irish language in the College of Maynooth, and whose premature death our vernacular literature must ever deplore, in commenting on the foregoing definitions, observed,—“these writers had, evidently, but a slight acquaintance with our native dialect, or they would have known that the C, and G, are commutable letters, and that in classic Irish the devout followers of Columb-Kille were denominated *Giolla De*, i. e. the servant of God, as *Giallo Columb-Kille*, the servant of the Dove of the Church; *Giolla Chreest*, the servant of Christ.”

The *Saint and Bard*-claiming *Macpherson*, has written several essays to prove that St. Columba and his *Culdees*, notwithstanding the positive evidence of Fordun, Bæthius and Buchanan, were Caledonians. But the elegant antiquarian Dr. Smith, one honest Scot, who was too proud to despoil the temple of our sacred antiquities, says in the preface of his Gaelic dictionary—“The *Culdees* were of the Irish rule, and carried into Scotland by the famous Columba, and from thence dispersed into the northern parts of England.” The illustrious author of the

Hector Bæthius in his history of Scotland. "With St. Columbkille," said the father of Caledonian history, "there came from Ireland twelve men eminently imbued with the doctrine of Christ and more so with piety and righteousness—their names were *Baathan*, *Cummins*, *Cobthac* and *Ethernene*, both nephews of the saint, *Burius* and *Fethus*, divines of illustrious descent. Two priests of the royal dynasty of O'Neil, and lastly *Scanlan*, *Eglodeus*, *Tataneus Motefar* and *Gallan*; all of whom, by their argumentation, prediction and writing, instructed the Picts and Caledonians in the soul-saving science of virtue, morality, and true religion." We also find by a relation of St. Columba's mission in Fordun's "*Scotic Cronicon*," that our saint was accompanied by St. Constantine, king of Cornwall, who, through the representations and censures of St. Gildas, of his crimes and enormous impiety, had been induced to become a penitent, and to repair to Ireland in order to place himself under the spiritual guidance of our saint.

Shortly after Columba's arrival in Caledonia, his cousin Connell, king of the Dal Riada, gave him a grant of the Island of Hy, or *Iona*, in which he built a monastery that afterwards became as famous for the learning and sanctity of its ecclesiastics, as for its grounds being the burial place of some of the kings of Ireland, Scotland, and Norway.

The celebrated island of *Icolumb-kille* "that illustrious ground that was once dignified by learning and consecrated by piety," is separated from the isle of Mull, by a narrow channel, and is about three miles in length, and one in breadth. In 1819, by a statement in an Edinburgh periodical, it contained seventy houses occupied by 386 inhabitants. The decayed and dilapidated Fanes, at whose mouldering altars Kings and Queens worshipped the God of the universe, present still in the aspect of their ruin and desolation noble and affecting traces of the Gothic grandeur that once rose here in the solemn majesty of architecture. In the middle of St. Columba's cathedral, on which Dr. Johnson wrote as eloquent a passage as any in the English language, stands a Gothic tower three stories high, and supported by four large arches. This cathedral is encircled by piles of magnificent ruins, in one of which are the three dilapidated tombs, each bearing on a marble tablet, an inscription. The tomb that contains the remains of forty-eight kings of Scotland, is inscribed, "*Tumulus regum Scotiae*," that in which four Irish monarchs were interred, has the inscription "*Tumulus regum Hiberniae*," and the sepulchre of three Norwegian kings, who were buried here is marked "*Tumulus regum Norwegia*."

But the famed piety and erudition which gave such illustrious pleasures of Hope, in a note to one of his poems coincides in the opinion of Dr. Smith.

Dr. Ledwich, the unnatural and unpatriotic asperser of the ancient glory and greatness of his native land, says of St. Columba and his successors in Iona—"For his Monks, he established such admirable rules, that they soon became as conspicuous for erudition as for sanctity of manners, and were thenceforward distinguished by the honourable appellation of *Culdees*, or the ministers of God." This is the only instance we believe in which the venal apostate, Dr. Ledwich, spoke as a true-born Irishman should, in vindication of his country.

eminence to Iona, have been already immortalized by the genius of religious and poetic inspiration.

The sanctity of the place, by a prophecy of St. Columb-Kille, made it for many centuries the most renowned cemetery in the world. A king of France, in the ninth century, made a pilgrimage to the shrine of Columba, in order to select the site of his grave in the holy ground of Iona. In the elegant translation of the great Scotch antiquary, the late Rev. Dr. Smith, of Cambeltown, we find the following English version of our Saint's prophecy, relating to his beloved isle.

"Seven years before the awful day,
When time shall be no more,
A watery deluge shall o'ersweep
Hibernia's grassy shore.

The green-clad isle too shall sink,
Whilst with the great and good,
Columba's happy Isle shall rear
Her towers above the flood."

We conclude our brief biography of St. Columb-Kille by the following extract from Moore's history of Ireland.

"During this, his last sojourn in Ireland, Columba visited all the various religious establishments which he had founded; passing some time at his favourite monastery at Dairmagh, and there devoting himself to the arrangement of matters connected with the discipline of the church. After accomplishing, to the best of his power, all the objects he had in view in visiting Ireland, he returned to his home in North Britain,—to that "Isle of his heart," as, in some prophetic verses attributed to him, Iona is called,*—and there, assiduous to the last in attending to the care of his monasteries and numerous churches, remained till death closed his active and beneficent course. The description given of his last moments by one who received the details from an eye-witness, presents a picture at once so calm and so vivid, that I shall venture, as nearly as possible in the words of his biographer, to relate some particulars of the scene.† Having been forewarned, it is said, in his dreams of the time when his death was to take place, he rose, on the morning of the day before, and ascending a small eminence, lifted up his hands and

* "In the Isle of my heart, the Isle of my love, instead of a monk's voice there shall be lowing of cattle. But, ere the world comes to an end, Iona shall flourish as before."—Cited in *Armstrong's Gaelic Dictionary*. Dr. Johnson appears to have been animated with a similar spirit of prophecy respecting this island. "Perhaps," says the moralist, "in the revolutions of the world, Iona may be, some time again, the instructress of the western regions." (*Journey to the Western Islands*.)

† Post hæc verba de illo dicens (descendens) monticellulo, et ad monasterium revertens, sedebat in tugurio Psalterium scribens; et ad illum tertii Psalmi versiculum perveniens, ubi scribitur, Inquirentes autem Dominum non deficient omnino, Hic, ait, in fine cessandum est paginæ; quæ vero sequuntur Baitheneus scribat. . . . Interim cætus monachorum cum luminaribus accurrens, Patre viso moriente, cæpit plangere; et ut ab aliquibus qui præsentibus inerant didicimus, Sanctus, necdum egrediente anima, apertis sursum oculis, ad utrumque latus cum mira hilaritate et lætitia circumspiciebat. . . . Diermitius tum Sancti sanctum sublevat, ad benedicendum monachorum chorum, dexteram manum: sed et ipse venerabilis Pater in quantum poterat, suam simul movebat manum.—*Adamnan*, lib. iii. cap. 3.

solemnly blessed the monastery. Returning from thence, he sat down in a hut adjoining, and there occupied himself in copying part of the Psalter, till, having finished a page with a passage of the thirty-third Psalm, he stopped and said, "Let Baithen write the remainder." This Baithen, who was one of the twelve disciples that originally accompanied him to Hy, had been named by him as his successor. After attending the evening service in the church, the Saint returned to his cell, and, reclining on his bed of stone, delivered some instructions to his favourite attendant, to be communicated to the brethren. When the bell rang for midnight prayer, he hastened to the church, and was the first to enter it. Throwing himself upon his knees, he began to pray—but his strength failed him; and his brethren, arriving soon after, found their beloved master reclining before the altar, and on the point of death. Assembling all around him, these holy men stood silent and weeping, while the Saint, opening his eyes, with an expression full of cheerfulness, made a slight movement of his hand, as if to give them his parting benediction, and in that effort breathed his last, being then in the seventy-sixth year of his age.

"The name of this eminent man, though not so well known throughout the Latin church as that of another Irish Saint, Columbanus, with whom he is frequently confounded,* holds a distinguished place among the Roman and other martyrologies, and in the British Isles will long be remembered with traditional veneration. In Ireland, rich as have been her annals in names of saintly renown, for none has she continued to cherish so fond a reverence, through all ages, as for her great Columb-Kille; while that Isle of the Waves,† with which his name is now inseparably connected, and which, through his ministry, became "the luminary of the Caledonian regions,"‡ has far less reason to boast of her numerous Tombs of Kings, than of those heaps of votive pebbles left by pilgrims on her shore, marking the path that once led to the honoured Shrine of her Saint.§ So great was the reverence paid to his remains in North Britain, that, at the time when the island of Hy began to be infested by the Danes, Kenneth III. had his bones removed to Dunkeld on the river Tay, and there founding a church, dedicated it to his memory; while the Saint's crosier, and a few other relics, were all that fell to the share of the land of his birth.||

* Among the writers who have been led into this confusion is M. Thierry, (*Hist. de la Conquete de l'Angleterre*) who, in pursuance of his professed object,—that of making his history picturesque,—has jumbled together the lives of the two saints most graphically.

† Such, according to some writers, is the meaning of the term Iona.—See *Garnett's Tour in the Highlands*, vol. i.

‡ "We were now treading that illustrious island, which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions. That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer upon the ruins of Iona."—*Dr. Johnson's Journey to the Western Islands*.

§ "The Port na Curachan, where Columba is said to have first landed;—a bay towards the West, which is marked by large conical heaps of pebbles, the penitentiary labours, as tradition says, of pilgrims to his shrine."—*Macculloch's Western Isles*.

|| Among the various prophecies attributed to St. Columba, the arrival of the English and their conquest of the country were, it is said, foretold by him.

"In the Annals of the Four Masters, for the year 1006, we find mention made of a splendid copy of the Four Gospels, said to have been written by St. Columba's own hand, and preserved at Kells in a cover, richly ornamented with gold. In the time of Usher, this precious manuscript was still numbered among the treasures of Kells,* and if not written by Columba himself, is little doubted to have been the work of one of his disciples.

CHAPTER LI.

Biographical sketches of St. Bridgid and St. Columbanus.

MR. MOORE in narrating the events of those Saints lives has displayed them under a brief, but luminous compendium. He says, "To give an account of all the numerous saints, male and female, whom the fervent zeal of this period quickened into existence and celebrity, would be a task so extensive as to require a distinct historian to itself; and, luckily, this important part of Ireland's history, during her first Christian ages, has been treated fully, and with the most sifting zeal and industry, by a writer in every respect qualified for such a task, and who has left no part of his ample subject untouched or unexplored.† Referring, therefore, to this learned historian for a detailed account of the early Irish church, I shall notice such only of its most distinguished ornaments as became popularly known throughout Europe, and regained for the "Sacred Island" of other days, all its ancient fame, under the new Christian designation of "the Island of Saints."

"The institution of female monasteries, or nunneries, such as, in the fourth century, were established abroad by Melania, and other pious women, was introduced into Ireland, towards the close of the fifth century, by St. Bridgid; and so general was the enthusiasm her

"Then," says Giraldus, "was fulfilled the alleged prophecy of Columba, of Hibernia, who long since foretold that, in this war, there should be so great a slaughter of the inhabitants, that their enemies would swim up to the knees in their blood." (*Hibern. Expugnat.* lib. ii. cap. 16.) There is yet another remarkable passage of this prophecy, which adjourns its fulfilment to a very remote period.—"The Irish are said to have four prophets, Moling, Braccan, Patrick, and Columb-Kille, whose books, written in the Irish language, are still extant; and speaking of this conquest, (by the English,) they all bear witness that in after times the island of Ireland will be polluted with many conflicts, long strife, and much slaughter. But they all pronounce that the English shall not have a complete victory till but a very little before the day of judgment." "Omnes testantur eam crebris conflictibus, longoque certamine multa in posterum tempora multis cædibus fœdaturam. Sed vix parum ante diem judicii plenam Anglorum populo victoriam componittunt."—(*Ib.* cap. 33.)

* This Kells manuscript is supposed to have been the same now preserved in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, on the margin of which are the following words, written by O'Flaherty, in the year 1677:—"Liber autem hic scriptus est manu ipsius B. Columbæ."

† Ecclesiastical History of Ireland, by the Rev. John Lanigan, D. D.

example excited, that the religious order which she instituted spread its branches through every part of the country. Taking the veil herself at a very early age, when, as we are told, she was clothed in the white garment, and the white veil placed upon her head, she was immediately followed, in this step, by seven or eight other young maidens, who, attaching themselves to her fortunes, formed, at the first, her small religious community.* The pure sanctity of this virgin's life, and the supernatural gifts attributed to her, spread the fame she had acquired more widely every day, and crowds of young women and widows applied for admission into her institution. At first she contented herself with founding establishments for her followers in the respective districts of which they were natives; and in this task the bishops of the different dioceses appear to have concurred with and assisted her. But the increasing number of those who required her own immediate superintendence rendered it necessary to form some one great establishment, over which she should herself preside; and the people of Leinster, who claimed to be peculiarly entitled to her presence, from the illustrious family to which she belonged having been natives of their province, sent a deputation to her, to entreat that she would fix among them her residence. To this request the saint assented; and a habitation was immediately provided for herself and her sister nuns, which formed the commencement both of her great monastery and of the town or city of Kildare. The name of *Kill-dara*,† or Cell of the Oak, was given to the monastery from a very high oak-tree which grew near the spot, and of which the trunk was still remaining in the twelfth century;—no one daring, as we are told by Giraldus, to touch it with a knife. The extraordinary veneration in which St. Brigid was held, caused such a resort of persons of all ranks to this place—such crowds of penitents, pilgrims, and mendicants—that a new town sprang up rapidly around her, which kept pace with the growing prosperity of the establishment. The necessity of providing spiritual direction, as well for the institution itself, as for the numerous settlers in the new town, led to the appointment of a bishop of Kildare, with the then usual privilege of presiding over all the churches and communities belonging to the order of St. Brigid, throughout the kingdom.

“Among the eminent persons who were in the habit of visiting or corresponding with this remarkable woman, are mentioned St. Ailbe, of Emly, one of the fathers of the Irish church, and the Welsh author, Gildas, who is said to have sent to St. Brigid, as a token of his regard, a small bell cast by himself.‡ By one of those

* The bishop who admitted her into the number of Sacred Virgins, was named Maccaile, or Maccaleus; and the ceremony is thus described by her biographer, Cogitosus:—“Qui (Maccaleus) cæleste intuens desiderum et pudicitiam, et tantum tastitatis amorem in tali virgine, pallium album et vestem candidam super ipsius venerabile caput imposuit.”—Cap. 3.

† Illa jam cella Scotice dicitur *Kill-dara*, Latine vero sonat *Cella Quercus*. Quercus enim altissima ibi erat, cujus stipes adhuc manet.—*S. Brigid. Vita*.

‡ A veneration for small portable bells, as well as for staves, which had once belonged to holy persons, was, in the time of Giraldus, common both among the laity and clergy. “Campanus baiulas, baculos quoque in superiori parte camera-tos, auro et argento vel ære contactos, aliasque hujusmodi sanctorum reliquias, in

violations of chronology not unfrequently hazarded for the purpose of bringing extraordinary personages together, an intimate friendship is supposed to have existed between St. Brigid and St. Patrick, and she is even said to have woven, at the apostle's own request, the shroud in which he was buried. But with this imagined intercourse between the two saints, the dates of their respective lives are inconsistent; and it is but just possible that Brigid might have seen the great apostle of her country, as she was a child of about twelve years old when he died.

"Among the miracles and gifts by which, no less than by her works of charity and holiness, the fame of St. Bridgid and her numerous altars was extended, has always been mentioned, though on the sole authority of Giraldus Cambrensis, that perpetual Fire, at Kildare, over which, through successive ages, the holy virgins are said to have kept constant watch; and which, so late as the time of Giraldus, about six hundred years from the date of St. Brigid, was, as he tells us, still unextinguished. Whether this rite formed any part of the Saint's original institution,* or is to be considered but as an innovation of later times, it is, at all events, certain that at the time when Kildare was founded, the policy of converting to the purposes of the new faith those ancient forms and usages which had so long been made to serve as instruments of error, was very generally acted upon; and, in the very choice of a site for St. Brigid's monastery, the same principal is manifest; the old venerable oak, already invested with the solemnity of Druidical associations, having, in this, as in most other instances of religious foundation, suggested the selection of the spot where the Christian temple was to rise.

"Having lived to reap the reward of her self-devotion and zeal, in the perfect success and even ascendancy of the institution which she had founded, St. Brigid closed her mortal course at Kildare, about A. D. 525, four years, it is calculated, after the birth of the great Columb-Kille,† being herself, at the time of her death, about 74 years of age. The honour of possessing the remains of this holy woman was, for many centuries, contested not only by different parts of Ireland, but likewise by North Britain; the Irish of Ulster

magna reverentia tam Hybernæ et Scotiæ, quam et Walliæ populus et clerus habere solent."—*Itiner. Camb.* lib. i. cap. 2. The same writer mentions the Campana Fugitiva of O'Toole, the chieftain of Wicklow; and we are informed by Colgan (in Triad.) that whenever St. Patrick's portable bell tolled, as a preservative against evil spirits and magicians, it was heard from the Giant's Causeway to Cape Clear, from the Hill of Howth to the western shores of Connemara, "per totam Hiberniam." See note on this subject in Hardman's Irish Minstrels, vol. i.

* Dr. Lanigan repels indignantly the notion of Ledwich and others, that St. Brigid, and her sister nuns of Kildare, were "but a continuation of heathen druidesses, who preserved from remotest ages an inextinguishable fire." There is, however, an ordinance of Scriptural authority, in which St. Brigid may have found a sanction for her shrines. "The fire upon the altar (of the tabernacle) shall be burning in it, and shall not be put out."—*Leviticus*, ch. vi. ver. 12. It was for condemning this inextinguishable fire, and using a profane fire in its stead, that the Levites Nadab and Abihu were miraculously put to death. See *Dr. Milner's Inquiry*, letter 11.

† According to other accounts, he was born about 539,—“A date much earlier,” says Dr. Lanigan, “than that of Mebillon and others, but much more probable.”

contending strenuously that she had been buried, not at Kildare, but in Down;* while the Picts as strongly insisted that Abernethy was her resting-place; and the British Scots, after annexing the Pictish territories to their own, paid the most fervent homage to her supposed relics in that city. But in no place, except in Kildare, was her memory cherished with such affectionate reverence as in that seat of all saintly worship, the Western Isles; where to the patronage of St. Brigid most of the churches were dedicated: by her name, one of the most solemn oaths of the islanders was sworn; and the first of February, of every year, was held as a festival in her honor.”†

St. Brigid, the fame of whose sanctity, the number of whose miracles, and the lustre of whose exalted virtues acquired for her respect and reverence, not only in her own country, but on the Continent of Europe, was born in the little town of Faughard, in the county of Louth,‡ about the middle of the fifth century. “Though,” says the learned able M’Geoghegan, “she was the fruit of a criminal commerce between Dubtach, a chieftian of Louth, and a young girl whom he seduced; God, who knows how to draw the most heroic virtues from imperfection itself, atoned for the disgrace of her birth, by such an abundance of grace, that she became a vessel of election, and a model of perfection. She and many more of her companions received the veil from the hands of Machilenus, Bishop and disciple of St. Patrick. She then retired to Kildare, where she founded a monastery, in a forest of oaks, which was the chief of its order, and where she established a particular rule. Immersed in this retreat, the virtues of this female apostle, though exercised remote from the giddy gaze of the world, and its indiscriminating applause, shone forth with a lustre that inspired by its heat, and illuminated by its radiance. But the love of God, and of her neighbour, seemed to be the *primum mobile* of all her other virtues. This heat of divine love may be compared to the fire which she always kept lit in her monastery, to relieve the cold and the naked from a portion of

* The claims of Down to the possession of her remains, as well as those of St. Patrick and St. Columba, are commemorated in the following couplet, cited by Camden:—

“Hi tres in Duno tumulo tumulantur in uno
Brigida, Patricius atque Columba pius.”

† “From these considerations,” says Macpherson, “we have reason to suspect that the Western Isles of Scotland were, in some one period or other, during the reign of popery, and perhaps in a great measure, appropriated to St. Brigid.—*Crit. Dissert.*

In Gaelic, the name of Brigid, is, according to this writer, Bride; and by *Hebrides*, or *Ey-brides*, is meant, he says, the Islands of Brigid.

‡ FAUGHARD, (or *Fasach-ard*, the grassy head-land,) the birth place of St. Brigid, is situated about two miles and a quarter from the town of Dundalk, the capitol of the county of Louth. In 638, we are informed by Archbishop Usher, St. Monenna erected here a convent, to St. Brigid, in which she presided over 150 virgins. The present Protestant church stands on the site of the convent.

There is a fine Rath, elevating its green summit to the height of sixty feet, here. Faughard has been the scene of memorable events of Irish history,—for it was there Sir John Birmingham defeated and slew Prince Edward Bruce in 1316. It will also ever derive celebrity from its being the battle field, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, where the armies of O’Neil, Earl of Tyrone, and of Earl Mount Joy, the then Lord Deputy of Ireland, desperately fought and struggled for victory. O’Neil made a gallant retreat from that place to Newry.

their miseries. It was called the inextinguishable fire, from having remained many centuries unextinguished; and though, on several occasions, a great quantity of wood and other combustible matter were added to it, the ashes were never increased.

To this miracle Cambrensis bears testimony—a testimony that is always given tremulously and partially, when Ireland can derive any honour from its hesitating concessions. It cannot, therefore, be credulity to believe in anything that Cambrensis admits in favor of Ireland, or its saints.”

We translate into English the Latin opinion of Cambrensis (Gerald Barry,) on the subject of the unextinguishable fire, which for ages burned in Kildare abbey. “Many and signal miracles performed at Kildare, a city of Leinster, which is rendered illustrious by the glorious St. Bridgid, are worthy of being consigned to memory. Amongst the first, we may reckon the fire of St. Bridgid, which is said to be unextinguishable, not because it cannot be extinguished, but because the nuns and holy women so carefully nourish and supply it with new fuel, that, from the time of that virgin, through a revolution of so many ages, it has always remained unextinguished. And though so great a quantity of wood must have been here consumed, in so long a period, yet the ashes have never increased.”

This saint died at Kildare, according to Colgan, in A. D. 521. She was interred in the abbey of Kildare; but some years after her death, her remains were deposited in the grave of St. Patrick at Down.

So much were her eminent virtues and saintly piety regarded on the Continent of Europe, and so bright a halo of praise encircled her fame there, that churches were founded in honor of her at Seville, in Spain—at Lisbon, in Portugal—Placentia (Italy)—at Tours, Besancon, Namur, and Cologne, (where one of the principal churches of the city is dedicated to her name.) A church was also dedicated to her memory in London. Colgan enumerates sixty religious edifices that were consecrated to her memory in the dioceses of Tuam, Elphin, Kildare, Dublin and Lismore.

“It has been already observed that the eminent Irish saint, Columbkil, has been often confounded, more especially by foreign writers, with his namesake, Columba, or Columbanus, whose fame, from the theatre of his holy labours having been chiefly France and Italy, has, among the people of the Continent, obscured or rather absorbed within its own light that of the apostle of the Western Isles. The time of the birth of St. Columbanus is placed about forty years later than that of Columbkil, A. D. 559; and though not of royal extraction, like his distinguished precursor, he appears to have been of a noble family, and also endowed by nature with what he himself considered to be a perilous gift, personal beauty. In order to escape the dangerous allurements of the world, he withdrew from his native province, Leinster; and, after some time passed in sacred studies, resolved to devote himself to a monastic life. The monastery of Bangor, in Ulster, already celebrated in Ireland, by the subsequent career of St. Columbanus, rendered famous throughout all Europe,

was the retreat chosen by this future antagonist of pontiffs and kings ; and at that school he remained, under the discipline of the pious St. Congall, for many years. At length, longing for a more extended sphere of action, he resolved to betake himself to some foreign land ; and having, at the desire of the abbot, selected from among his brethren, twelve worthy companions, turned his eyes to the state of the Gauls, or France, as requiring especially such a mission as he meditated. By the successive irruptions of the northern barbarians into that country, all the elements of civilized life had been dispersed, and a frightful process of demoralization was now rapidly taking place, to which a clergy, indolent and torpid, and often even interested in the success of the spoilers, could oppose but a feeble check.* For a missionary, therefore, like Columbanus, full of courage in the cause of Christ, there could not have been selected a more inviting or productive field of enterprise.

“ Proceeding to the province which has been since called Franche Comte, one of the first acts of his ministry was to erect a monastery on a spot named Luxeuil, in a thick part of the forest, at the foot of the Vosges. From hence so widely was the fame of his sanctity diffused, and so great the concourse of persons, of all ranks, but more especially, as we are told, of young nobles, who came to profit by his instructions, and devote themselves to a religious life, that he found it necessary to establish a second monastery in the neighbourhood, to which, on account of the abundance of its springs, he gave the name of Fontaines.† In times, however, when the priest alone could present any effectual countercheck to the soldier, so active and daring a mind as that of the abbot of Luxeuil could not long remain uninvolved in public strife ; and his courageous frankness in reproving the vices of the young Thierry, king of Burgundy, drew upon him the enmity as well of that prince as of the fierce vindictive queen-dowager, Brunehaut. The details of the scenes and transactions in which, so perilously to his own safety, the Irish saint was brought into collision with these barbarian potentates, besides that they belong more properly to foreign history, would usurp a space, perhaps, disproportionate to their interest. They will be

* This state of things is acknowledged by the saint's biographer, Jonas :—“ Ubi tunc vel ob frequentiam hostium externorum, vel negligentiam præsulum, religionis virtus pene abolita habebatur ; fides tantum remanebat Christiana. Nam pœnitentiæ medicamentum et mortificationis amor vix vel paucis in illis reperiebatur locis.”—*S. Columban Vita*.

“ The clergy of the Roman church,” says Mr. James, (*Hist. of Charlemagne, Introd.*) “ thickly spread over every part of Gaul, without excepting the dominions of Aquitaine and Burgundy, had already courted the Franks, even when governed by a heathen monarch ; but now that he professed the same faith with themselves, they spared neither exertions nor intrigues to facilitate the progress of his conquests.”

† In speaking of this monastery, the Benedictines say, “ Fontaines n'est plus aujourd'hui qu'un Prieure dependant de Luxeu.” On the latter establishment they pronounce the following eulogium :—“ Les grands hommes qui en sortirent en bon nombre, tant pour gouverner des eglises entieres que de simples monasteres, repandirent en tant d'endroits le smaximes salutaires de ce sacre desert que plusieurs de nos provinces parurent avoir change de face. Et a qui doit revenir la principale gloire de tous ces avantages, sinon a leur premier Instituteur le B. Columban ?”

found worthy, however, of a brief, passing notice, less as history, than as pictures for the imagination, in which the figure of the stern but simple and accomplished missionary stands out to the eye with the more force and dignity from the barbaric glare and pomp of the scenes and personages around him.

"Thus, on one occasion, when the queen-dowager, seeing him enter the royal court, brought fourth the four illegitimate children of king Thierry to meet him, the saint emphatically demanded what they wanted. "They are the king's children," answered Brunehaut, "and are come to ask your blessing."—"These children," replied Columbanus, "will never reign: they are the offspring of debauchery." Such insulting opposition to her designs for her grandchildren roused all the rage of this Jezebel, and orders were issued withdrawing some privileges which the saint's monasteries had hitherto enjoyed. For the purpose of remonstrating against this wrong, he sought the palace of the king; and, while waiting the royal audience, rich viands and wines were served up for his refreshment. But the saint sternly refused to partake of them, saying, "It is written, 'the Most High rejects the gifts of the impious;' nor is it fitting that the mouths of the servants of God should be defiled with the viands of one who inflicts on them such indignities."

"Another scene of the same description occurred subsequently at Luxeuil. The monastic Rule introduced into France by Columbanus, though afterwards incorporated, or rather confounded with that of St. Benedict,* was derived originally from the discipline established at the monastery of Bangor, in Ireland; and one of the regulations most objected to, in the system followed both at Luxeuil and Fontaines, was that by which access to the interior of these monasteries was restricted. On this point, as on many others, an attempt was made, by the revengeful Brunehaut, to excite a persecution against the saint; and the king, envenomed by her representations, was induced to join in her plans. Resolved to try the right of entrance in person, he proceeded, accompanied by a train of nobles, to the monastery; and finding Columbanus himself at the gate, said as he forced his way in, "If you desire to derive any benefit from our bounty, these places must be thrown open to every comer." He had already got as far as the refectory, when, with a courage worthy of a St. Ambrose, Columbanus thus addressed him:—"If you endeavour to violate the discipline here established, know that I dispense with your presents, and with every aid that it is in your power to lend; and, if you now come hither to disturb the monasteries of the servants of God, I tell you that your kingdom shall be destroyed, and with it all your royal race." The king, terrified, it is said, by this denunciation, immediately withdrew.

"A speech attributed to the Burgundian monarch, on this occasion, betrays no want either of tolerance or of the good sense from

* See, for several instances, in which the two rules are thus confounded, Usher's *Ecclesiastical Primord.* 1050. "Non quod una eademque esset utriusque Regula; sed quod Columbani sectatores, majoris profectus ergo, duas illas celeberrimas asceticæ vitæ normas conjunxissent, quæ mediis hisce temporibus in Italia, Gallia, et Germania solæ enitebant et apparebant."—*Usser.*

which that virtue springs. "I perceive you hope," said he to Columbanus, "that I shall give you the crown of martyrdom; but I am not so unwise as to commit so heinous a crime. As your system, however, differs from that of all other times, it is but right that you should return to the place from whence you came." Such a suggestion, from royal lips, was a command; but the noble Scot was not so easily to be separated either from the companions who had followed his fortunes from home, or those friendships he had formed in a strange land. "If they would have me depart," said he, "they must drag me from the cloister by force:"—and to these violent means it was found necessary, at last, to have recourse; a party of soldiers having been ordered by his royal persecutors to proceed to Luxeuil, and drive him from the monastery. The whole of the brotherhood expressed their readiness to follow their abbot to any part of the world; but none were allowed to accompany him except his own countrymen, and such few Britons as had attached themselves to the community. A corps of guards was sent to escort them on their route towards Ireland, and it was to the commander of this escort, that, on their arrival at Auxerre, Columbanus pronounced that terrible prediction, as it has been called, of the union of all the crowns of France on the single head of Clotaire:—"Remember what I now tell you," said the intrepid monk; "that very Clotaire whom ye now despise will, in three years' time, be your master."

"On the arrival of the saint and his companions at Nantes, where it was meant to embark them for Ireland, a fortunate accident occurred to prevent the voyage; and he was still reserved for those further toils in foreign lands to which he had felt himself called. Being now free to pursue his own course, he visited successively the courts of Clotaire and Theodobert, by both of whom he was received with marked distinction, and even consulted on matters vital to the interests of his kingdom by Clotaire. After an active course of missionary labours throughout various parts of France and Germany, the saint, fearful of again falling into the hands of his persecutors, Brunehaut and Thierry, whose powers of mischief their late successes had much strengthened, resolved to pass with his faithful companions into Italy; and, arriving at Milan, at the court of Agilulph, king of the Lombards, received from that sovereign and his distinguished queen, Theodelinda, the most cordial attentions.

"It is supposed to have been during his stay at Milan that Columbanus addressed that spirited letter to Boniface IV., respecting the question of the Three Chapters, in which, distinguishing between the Chair of Rome and the individual who may, for the moment, occupy it, he shows how compatible may be the most profound and implicit reverence towards the papacy, with a tone of stern and uncompromising reprehension towards the pope. The decision of the Fifth General Council, held in the year 553, which condemned the writings known by the name of the Three Chapters, as heterodox, had met with considerable opposition from many of the Western bishops; and those of Histria and Liguria were the most obstinate in their schism. The queen Theodelinda, who had so much distinguished herself in the earlier part of her reign by the vigour with

which she had freed her kingdom from the inroads of Arianism, had, not many years before the arrival of Columbanus at Milan, awakened the alarm of the Roman court by treating with marked favour and encouragement the schismatic bishops of Histria; and it was only by a course of skilful management that St. Gregory averted the danger, or succeeded in drawing back this princess to her former union with the church. It would appear, however, that, after the death of that great pope, the Lombard court had again fallen off into schism;—for it was confessedly at the strong instance of Agilulph himself, that Columbanus addressed his expostulatory letter to pope Boniface;* and the views which he takes of the question in that remarkable document, are, for the most part, those of the schismatics or defenders of the Three Chapters. Setting aside, however, all consideration of the saint's orthodoxy on this point,† his letter cannot but be allowed the praise of unshrinking manliness and vigour. Addressing Boniface himself in no very complaisant terms, he speaks of his predecessor, pope Vigilus, with bitter, and, in some respects, deserved reproach; declaring that pope to have been the prime mover of all the scandal that had occurred.‡ With national warmth, too, he boldly vindicates the perfect orthodoxy of his fellow-countrymen, the Irish, assuring Boniface that they had never yet swerved from the apostolic doctrines delivered to them by Rome; and that there had never been among them any heretics, Jews, or schismatics.§

“Having received permission from king Agilulph to fix himself in whatever part of the Lombard dominions he should think fit, Columbanus selected a retired spot amidst the Apennines; and, founding there the monastery of Bobbio, passed in that retreat the brief remainder of his days; dying on the 21st of November, A. D. 615.||

* Among other passages, to this purport, in his letter, is the following:—“A rege cogor ut sigillatim suggeram tuis piis auribus sui negotium doloris. Dolor namque suus est schisma populi pro regina, pro filio, forte et pro se ipso.”

† The Benedictines thus account for the part which he took on this question:—“St. Columban, au reste, ne parle de la sorte dans cette lettre que parcequ'il etait mal instruit de la grande affaire des Trois Chapitres; et qu'il avait ete sans doute prevenu a ce sujet par Agilulfe, qui s'en etait declare le fauteur, et peut-etre par quelques uns des schismatiques de Lombardie.”—*Hist. Litt. de la France*, tom. iv.

A letter of Pope Gregory, on the subject of this now-forgotten controversy, has been erroneously supposed to have been addressed to the Irish:—*Gregorius universis Episcopis ad Hiberniam*,” as the epistle is headed in some old editions of Gregory's works. But it is plain that “*Hiberniam*” has been substituted, by mistake, for “*Histriam*,” in which latter country the schism on this point chiefly raged. See Dr. Lanigan, chap. 13, note 57.

‡ *Vigila, quia forte non bene vigilavit Vigilus, quem caput scandali ipsi clamant.*

§ *Nullus hæreticus, nullus Judæus, nullus schismaticus fuit: sed fides catholica, sicut a vobis primum, sanctorum scilicet apostolorum successoribus, tradita est, inconcussa tenetur.*

|| Among the poetical remains of Columbanus are some verses of no inconsiderable merit, in which he mentions his having then reached the years of an eighteenth Olympiad. The poem is addressed to his friend Fedolius, and concludes as follows:—

“Hæc tibi dictaram morbis oppressus acerbis
Corpore quos fragili patior, tristisque senecta!
Nam dum præcipiti labuntur tempora cursu,

"The various countries and places with which the name of this great saint is connected, have multiplied his lasting titles to fame. While Ireland boasts of his birth, and of having sent forth, before the close of the sixth century, so accomplished a writer from her schools, France remembers him by her ancient abbeys of Luxeuil and Fontaines; and his fame in Italy still lives, not only in the cherished relics of Bobbio—in the coffin, the chalice, the holly, staff of the founder, and the strange sight of an Irish missal in a foreign land*—but in the yet fresher and more every-day remembrance bestowed upon his name by its association with the beautifully situated town of San Columbano, in the territory of Lodi.

"The writings of this eminent man that have come down to us display an extensive and varied acquaintance, not merely with ecclesiastical, but with classical literature. From a passage in his letter to Boniface, it appears that he was acquainted both with the Greek and Hebrew languages; and when it is recollected that he did not leave Ireland till he was nearly fifty years of age, and that his life afterwards was one of constant activity and adventure, the conclusion is obvious, that all this knowledge of elegant literature must have been acquired in the schools of his own country. Such a result from a purely Irish education, in the middle of the sixth century, is, it must be owned, not a little remarkable.† Among his extant works are some Latin poems, which, though not admissible, of course, to the honours of comparison with any of the writings of a classic age, shine out in this twilight period of Latin literature with no ordinary distinction.‡ Though wanting the free and fluent versification of his contemporary Fortunatus, he displays more energy both of thought and style; and, in the becoming gravity of his subjects, is distinguished honourably from the episcopal poet.§ In his prose writings, the

Nunc ad Olympiadis ter senos venimus annos.
Omnia prætereunt, fugit irreparabile tempus.
Vive, vale lætus, tristisque memento senectæ."

* Dr. O'Connor supposes this missal to have been brought from Luxeuil to Bobbio by some followers of St. Columbanus:—"Ad horum vagantium (episcoporum) usum, codicem de quo agimus exaratum fuisse vel inde patet, quod fuerit Misale portabile, quod allatum fuerit seculo viimo, ex Hibernorum monasterio Luxoviense in Gallia, ad Hibernorum monasterium Bobiense in Alpibus Cottiiis."—*Ep. Nunc.*

† La Lumière que S. Columban repandit par son savoir et sa doctrine dans tous les lieux où il se montra l'a fait comparer par un écrivain du même siècle au soleil dans sa course de l'orient à l'occident. Il continua, après sa mort, de briller dans plusieurs disciples qu'il avait formés aux lettres et à la piété."—*Hist. Litt. de la France.*

The same learned writers, in speaking of the letters of St. Columbanus still extant, say,—“On a peu de monuments des vi. et vii. siècles où l'on trouve plus d'érudition ecclésiastique qu'il y en a dans les cinq lettres dont on vient de rendre compte.”

‡ On voit effectivement par la lecture de son poème a Fedolius en particulier, qu'il possédait l'histoire et la fable. Quoique sa versification soit bien éloignée de la perfection de celle des anciens, elle ne laisse pas néanmoins d'avoir son mérite; et l'on peut assurer qu'il y a peu de poètes de son temps qui aient mieux réussi à faire des vers."—*Hist. Litt., &c.* par des Religieux Benedictines.

§ Those who are at all acquainted with the verses of this bishop, written, most of them, “inter pocula,”—as he himself avows, in his Dedicatory Epistle to Pope Gregory,—will be inclined to agree that it was not difficult to surpass him in decorum.

style of Columbanus is somewhat stiff and inflated ; more especially in the letters addressed by him to high dignitaries of the church, where the effort to elevate and give force to his diction is often too visible to be effective. In the moral instructions, however, written for his monks, the tone both of style and thought, is, for the most part, easy and unpretending."

CHAPTER LII.

The joint reign of Hugh-Slaine and Colman,—succeeded by Hugh Uariodnach.—Malcobha-Clearach becomes possessed of the Irish crown.—His resignation.—Election of Suibhre Mean.—He is defeated by Daniel, who succeeds him.—War with Colman, King of Ulster.—St. Fechin, Connall Claon, and his brother Ceallach, joint monarchs.—Defeated by Dermot and Blathmac who ascend the throne.—A fatal plague in Ireland.—The election of Seachnach.—Ulster invaded by the Picts.—Kinfoaladh succeeds.—Second invasion of the Picts.—Fionachta is declared Monarch of Ireland ; who is succeeded by Loingseach, and is slain in battle. A. D. 600, and 698.

THE monarch Aodh was succeeded by Aodh-slaine, the grandson of Connall ; but whether by the election of the national estates, or by the force of the sword, is not stated by our historians.

We suppose that Colman Rinibidh, whom he associated with him on the throne, assisted him in ascending it. Colman was the grandson of King Murtough, whose history we have already narrated. We are informed by the Annals of the Four Masters that, in consequence of some difference which Colman's son, Suine, had, with Aodh, that the latter slew the former. To revenge the death of his brother, Connall, the son of Colman, assassinated the monarch. Colman did not long survive his regal companion ; for, in the year 600, he fell under the sword of an assassin. As his successor, the national estates elected *Aodh Uariodnach*, an appellation bestowed upon him, because he was subject, periodically, to be afflicted by a violent pain in the side. He was the grandson of the monarch Murtough, and he, according to the testimony of the Irish historians, was gifted with superior mental endowments, and other qualifications fitted to shed lustre on the character of a prince. He had not long worn the diadem, when Angus, the son of Colman, and Connall, the son of Aodh-Slaine, made an attempt to tear it from his brow, by entering into a conspiracy, and fomenting a revolt. To crush this insurrection, the monarch, at the head of an army, advanced to Odder, where, the rebels had encamped, and attacked them with such vigour, that they were annihilated, and their two chiefs slain.*

* THE ODDER is a small hamlet town, situated in the barony of Skryne, county of Meath, at the distance of two miles south of Tara. The Barnwall family founded a nunnery there, dedicated to St. Brigid, in A. D. 1180, for regular Canonesses, belonging to the order of St. Augustine. Pope Celestine III., in 1195, on being made acquainted with the pious, exemplary conduct

But scarcely had the monarch returned to his palace, to celebrate his triumph, ere another rebel, Maolcobha, *Clearach* (or the churchman) hoisted the standard of revolt, which called Aodh again into the field. The contending parties came to an engagement on the plains of *Da-Fearta*, where, after a desperate struggle, the monarch was defeated and slain, in A. D. 606. Of the conqueror, M'Dermott, in his excellent history of Ireland, writes, "the appellation of *Clearach* was probably given to this prince, because he was educated for the church. By the death of Aodh, he exalted himself to that seat of turbulent power, which he preferred to the milder sway and chaster happiness of religion.

He reigned three years. Some authorities say, that he fell, at the end of this period, by the sword of Suibhre, his successor; but others assert, that he resigned the sovereign power to his successor, and passed the remainder of his days in the service of that church for which he was first intended.

This account I am inclined to credit; for, he who has once felt and indulged the sweets of religious impressions, will feel but a weak recompense in exchanging them for the glitter of royalty—a glitter that is perpetually overcast by the fears and anxieties with which it is surrounded."

SUIBHRE MEAN, the son of Fiacha, of the royal dynasty of Hy-Nial was invested with the regal purple, which he had not long worn, before Daniel, the brother of Maolcobha, lighted up the torches of rebellion and disaffection.

In the commencement of Daniel's insurrection, the monarch defeated his forces in two or three battles; but the aspirant to the throne, determined to succeed in his purpose, was so fortunate as to form an alliance with Seangall, King of Ulster, who sent to his assistance an army of 18,000, under the command of his son Connall. Thus, reinforced, he waged battle with the monarch, at Fraigh-breene, where he gained a decisive victory, and killed Suibhre with his own hand, in A. D. 623.

Daniel ascended the throne, but not with the wishes of the Irish people, because he waded to it through a sea of blood; and yet, strange to tell, some of our historians have represented him, as "a prince of great piety, charity, and mortifications." His reign was short: for his old friend of Ulster, Connall, envying his power, and arrogating to his father's troops and his own prowess, the cause of placing Daniel on the throne, he resolved to hurl him from that eminence of royalty to which he had helped to raise him. Connall, after setting forth in a manifesto, his pretensions to the supreme sceptre of Ireland, raised a large army, at the head of which he marched towards Meath; but was met by the monarch, at a place called *Maigh-Raith*, on the borders of the counties of Louth and Meath, where a

and charity which distinguished the friars and nuns of that convent, transmitted to the Bishop of Meath, a bull confirming them in all their possessions, and approving of their rules. By letters patent, issued under the royal seal of King Henry V. in 1418, the Prior of Louth was invested with the power of nominating the abbess of that nunnery.

bloody battle took place, in which the Ultonians were totally defeated, and their prince, Connall, slain.

In the pride and power of victory, the monarch forcibly seized upon several territories, that had been long possessed by the descendants of Nial the Great, in the counties of Meath, Louth, and Monaghan. The chiefs of the Hy-Nials, at that juncture, were the sons of Aodh-Slaine, who, not being able to oppose the aggressive invasion of the monarch, entreated the intercession of their kinsman, St. Fechin, the abbot of Fore, in the county of Westmeath.

In compliance with their request, the saint waited on the King, and remonstrated with him on his arbitrary conduct to the posterity of the "hero of the nine hostages;" but his expostulation and entreaties could not move the mind of the monarch from the path of despotism to that of justice. Finding the King inexorable, and not to be diverted from his oppressive acts, the saint, on taking his leave, denounced the tyranny of Daniel, and threatened him with the vengeance of heaven.

"The following night," writes M'DERMOTT, "a great fall of snow was interpreted by the imperial troops into a certain prognostication of the vengeance of heaven; but an aurora borealis, which soon after appeared, completed their fears, so that the panic became general. Daniel, whether he ascribed these appearances to natural or supernatural causes, knew, at least, that, with regard to him, it mattered not which; and, therefore, found it necessary to make peace with the enemy, as his soldiers would not lift a hand in his cause. The articles of reconciliation were soon agreed upon between him and the Hy-Nial chiefs; but the offended saint would not be so easily appeased, so that the monarch was obliged to make a journey to Fore abbey, and to submit to the most humiliating abasement before he obtained his forgiveness. During the last eighteen months of his reign, the monarch was confined to his bed. In this state of debility he employed himself in prayers and pious meditations, till death relieved him from his sufferings, on the last day of January, A. D. 639."

Daniel was succeeded by *Claon*, the son of Maolcobha, who, for some reason, unexplained by our historians, associated with him, on the throne, his brother, Ceallach.

Early in their reign, a war was waged by the Egonachts of Munster, and the southern Hy-Nials. The cause of this war arose from a jealousy that was excited between St. Cartagh, the first bishop of Lismore, and the monks of Dunshaghlin,* in consequence of the saint having, while on a pilgrimage in Meath, erected an abbey at Rathkenny, near Navan. The piety, learning, and discipline, which gave so much fame to the friars of this abbey, aroused the envy and enmity of the monks of Dunshaghlin, who applied to Blathmac, the

* DUNSHAGHLIN is a pretty little village, situated in the barony of Ratoath, in the county of Meath, at the distance of fourteen Irish miles from Dublin. In A. D. 439, St. Seachlin caused a church and an abbey to be built there. The saint died in November, 448, and was interred in the abbey, which is now a pile of venerable ruins.

The country around Dunshaghlin is highly cultivated, and rich in picturesque representations.

proprietor of Rathkenney to eject St. Cartagh and his monks from their establishment. Blathmac acceded to their request, and expelled the saint and his brethren from their house. The Munster princes, resenting the indignity offered to the saint, who was of the family of O'Connor Kerry, marched, at the head of an army, into Meath to punish Blathmac for the insult offered to the saintly bishop, as well as his breach of hospitality.

The contending belligerents came to an engagement, at a place called Carnconuil, in which, after a brave struggle, Cuan, the son of Amhalgaid, king of Munster—Cuan of the race of Finghin, or O'Sullivan—and the prince of Mi-Liathan, were slain, and their forces annihilated. The two victorious brothers flushed with the pride and ambition with which this victory elated them, came to the determination of making war on the monarch of Ireland, in the hope of wresting the diadem from his brow. Their resolution was strengthened by the death of Ceallach, the brother of the monarch, Connall, who had, shortly after their late victory, been drowned near Trim, in the river Boyne. At the head of a numerous army, they marched into Meath, and attacked the forces of Connall; obtained a signal victory over them, and slew the king in the battle. This conflict took place in A. D. 656. The victors ascended the Irish throne. "In their reign," writes M'DERMOTT, "an invasion took place from Britain, and a battle was fought at Pancti, where the greater part of the invading army was slain in the engagement with their commander in chief and thirty principal officers. But though the Irish nation had thus warded off the threats of foreign power, they were threatened with a more dangerous visitation from the plague—an enemy that would neither be subdued by power, nor softened by entreaty.

Numbers were swept off by its fatal virus, and the whole kingdom was menaced with desolation; nor did the monarchs themselves escape. It was called the "*bhuidhe chonuil*," or yellow plague, as all who were attacked by it, appeared jaundiced.

This plague is spoken of by Bede, but it would appear from his account of it, that it reached Ireland from Britain, while our MSS. give room to think that it first raged in Ireland, and afterwards passed over to Britain."

The contemporary provincial kings who swayed their power during the joint reign of Blathmac and Dermot, were the following:—In Munster the sceptre was wielded by *Feardomhnach* or Ferdinand, the son of Dioma; and Amhalgaid, of the Eugenic line, exercised the sovereignty of South Munster. Cuan, to whom we before alluded, as fallen in the battle of Carnconuil, was the son of the prince of South Munster, who was succeeded on the throne by his grandson, Aimleadha. At the same period, Fiachna held the reins of princely power in Ulster, *Ronan*, the son of Colman, in Leinster; and in Connaught, *Ragallach*, the son of Uutach. In Scotland, the Irish prince Eocha, occupied the throne.

After the death of the monarch, Blathmac, his son SEACHNACH was crowned king of Ireland. Shortly after his succession to the throne of Ireland, the Picts invaded Ulster, through which province they carried rapine and devastation. But their destructive progress

was at length arrested by the Irish, who attacked them at Feirt, county of Armagh, and obtained so dear-bought a victory over them, that the greater part of the Irish forces fell in the sanguinary field. The defeated and discomfited remains of the Picts fled to their ships, and hastily bore away for their own country. "We are not informed," says M'DERMOTT, "who commanded the Irish army in this engagement, whence I am inclined to think, that only a small party of the Picts made a descent to plunder some particular district, instead of invading the country with a powerful army, as Dr. O'Halloran would have it. The cause he assigns for this powerful invasion is utterly improbable—namely to weaken the Caledonian Irish, whose settlements were continually extending in Scotland, from the support which they received from their allies in Ulster. The Picts must have been blind indeed, to all sound policy, not to perceive, that a powerful army would be better employed in rooting out of the country the Irish settlers, against whom they might have some hopes of success, than in wasting it against the force of an entire nation, to whose assistance alone the Irish *Dalriada* were enabled to keep their ground in Scotland. They could have little hopes of success against Ireland, if they were unable to cope with a few Irish settlers in their own country. Soon after this engagement, though it does not appear that he was concerned in it, his brother, Kinfoaladh, was elected monarch. During the early part of his reign, the Picts made another descent on the northern coast of Ireland, where they committed the most licentious excesses. They ravaged and robbed the abbey of Bangor, in the county of Down, and slew, it is said, a thousand monks. Scarcely had the Picts been expelled from Ulster, ere Prince Fionachta, a daring chief, revolted against the monarch, and raised a formidable army which he led towards the royal residence. King Kinfoaladh mustered all his force, and marched towards his enemy. They came to battle; the result of which, was the defeat of the royal army, and the death of the monarch. The victor Fionachta, consequently obtained the crown. As soon as he mounted the throne, he determined to exact by force of arms, the *Boroihme*, or Leinster tribute.

The people of Leinster feeling justly indignant at the iniquitous demand of the monarch, resolved to resist it. They collected a large force, with which they opposed the despotic claims of the king. A battle took place near Kells, in the county of Meath, in which the king's forces were completely defeated. "In this age," writes M'DERMOTT, "not only in Ireland, but over the greater part of Europe, the weak had no security against the lawless hand of tyranny and oppression, but in the protection of the clergy, to whose voices even despots and tyrants were generally obsequious. *Seachnach* fell by the sword of *Dubh-Duin* of Aneoil Cairbre, A. D. 674."

At this juncture, St. Moling, Bishop of Ferns,* possessed great influence arising from his piety, learning, and exemplary conduct;

* FERNs, in the county of Wexford, though now a decayed village was, for ages, the royal residence of the kings of Leinster. The first bishop of the see was St. Edan, who flourished in the sixth century. In a future note we will give a more comprehensive description of Ferns.

and in order to prevent the repetition of the tragic occurrences to which the exaction of the Leinster tribute gave birth, he, accompanied by all his clergy, repaired to the camp of the monarch and remonstrated with him on the aggression and injustice of his enforcing the payment of so oppressive a tax. "The monarch," says one of our historians, "who was a prince of great piety, acknowledged the justice of the saint's appeal, and declared that the *Lagenians* should be thenceforth exonerated from the payment of the tribute. Shortly after he formed a resolution of abdicating the throne, and assuming the monastic habit, but he was persuaded to relinquish this design, and to enter into a religious confraternity, by which he, at once, preserved the crown, and indulged his propensity for religious exercises. The kingdom, however, derived no advantage from the virtues and moderation of the monarch. The Welsh, taking an advantage of his aversion for war, invaded the country, A. D. 682; and before a sufficient force could be collected, they destroyed and plundered several churches and monasteries, and succeeded in carrying off their booty with impunity. Two years after, the Northumbrian Saxons, under the command of Britus, spread desolation and ruin over a great part of the country. Their progress, however, was checked at Rathmore, county of Meath; here an engagement took place between them and the Irish, in which, after much bloodshed, they were defeated; and those who escaped were obliged to make a speedy retreat to their ships, and quickly fly the kingdom. Fionachta fell in battle, on the fourteenth of November, which was afterwards held as a festival, in honor of him, by the Irish church. Adamanus tells us, that during his reign, Gaul, Italy, Britain, and Ireland, were visited by a dreadful plague."

To the throne, left vacant by the death of Fionachta, succeeded Loingseach, his cousin-german. In the first year of his reign, A. D. 698, a combined army of Picts and Welsh effected a landing in Ulster, where they committed great depredations and ravages, and succeeded in carrying off immense spoils to their ships. Emboldened by the success of their late predatory incursion, they again, in the year 704, made another descent on the northern coast; but the Ultonians marched forward to oppose them, and gallantly attacked them at Magh Cullin, in the county of Antrim, and defeated the invaders with so great a slaughter, that but few of them escaped from the terrible conflict.

At this era, prince Congall, of the dynasty of Nial the Great, entered into a league with Ceallach of Connaught, to dethrone the monarch Loingseach. Ceallach, being a valiant and skilful general, took the chief command of the allied army against the forces of Loingseach, over whom he gained, at Cormin, in Meath, a signal victory. The monarch lost his life in the engagement, and his crown was bestowed, by the victor, to his associate, Congall.

At this period, A. D. 706, the reigning provincial princes of Ireland, were Eidirseoil in Munster, Bairche in Ulster, Bran Mac Connall in Leinster, and Ceallach in Connaught.

CHAPTER I.III.

Disputes respecting the Paschal Computation.

MR. MOORE, in his history of a famous and memorable controversy, which so long and violently agitated the Christian world, has displayed such deep antiquarian research, and illustrated and illuminated the abstruse subject with so refulgent a blaze of knowledge and learning, that we are proud we can enrich our history with so inestimable a fund of information.

“On the question respecting the time of keeping Easter, which, about the beginning of the seventh century, produced such a contest between the British and Irish clergy on one side, and the church of Rome and her new missionaries in Britain upon the other, some letters were addressed by Columbanus to the Gallican bishops and the pope; in which, defending the Paschal system, as it had been always observed by his countrymen, he requests ‘to be allowed to follow the tradition of his elders, in so far as it is not contrary to faith.’ Though upon a point by no means essential as regarded either faith or discipline, yet so eagerly was this controversy entered into by the learned Irish of that day, and with so much of that attachment to old laws and usages, which has at all periods distinguished them, that a brief account of the origin and nature of the dispute forms a necessary part of the history of those times.

“Very early in the annals of the Christian church, a difference of opinion with respect to the time of celebrating Easter had arisen; and it was not till the great Council of Nice, A. D. 325, had prescribed a rule by which the day of this festival was to be fixed, that, throughout the Asiatic and Western churches, a uniformity of practice in the time of celebrating it was observed. Owing to the difference, however, of the cycles, used by different churches, in making their calculations, it was soon found, that to preserve this desired uniformity would be a matter of much difficulty. By the decree of the Council of Nice it was fixed, that a Paschal festival should be held on the Sunday next after the fourteenth day of the first lunar month. In determining this time, however, the church of Rome and the church of Alexandria differed materially; the former continuing to compute by the old Jewish cycle of eighty-four years, while the latter substituted the cycle of nineteen years, as corrected by Eusebius; and the consequence was a difference, sometimes of nearly a month, between the Alexandrian and Roman calculations.

“When St. Patrick came on his mission to Ireland, he introduced the same method of Paschal computation, namely, by the cycle of eighty-four years, which was then practiced at Rome, and which the apostle taught as he had learned it in Gaul from Sulpicius Severus, by whom a change only of the mode of reckoning the days of the moon was introduced into it. To this method the Irish as well as the British churches continued to adhere, until subsequently to

the arrival of Augustine upon his mission to Britain. In the mean time, the Romans, having in vain endeavoured, by conference and concession, to adjust the differences between the Alexandrian calculations and their own, thought it advisable, for the sake of peace, to try a new method; and the cycle of Dionysius Exiguus, framed about 525, being in agreement with the Alexandrian method and rules, was adopted by them about the middle of the sixth century.

“From the little communication that took place between the churches of the British Isles and Rome—owing to the troubled state of the intervening nations, and the occupation of the coasts of Britain by the Saxons—nothing was known in these countries of the adoption of a new cycle by Rome; and, accordingly, when Augustine and his brethren arrived, they found both the British and the Irish in perfect ignorance of the reformation, which had, in the interim, been made, and computing their Easter by the old cycle of eighty-four years, as formerly practiced at Rome. In one particular alone, the change introduced by Sulpicius, did the Irish church—to which my remarks shall henceforward be confined—differ from the system originally pursued by the Romans; and this difference, which was, in reality, rather a correction of the old Roman cycle than a departure from it, consisted in their admission of the fourteenth day of the month, as fit for the celebration of Easter, in falling on a Sunday. The fourteenth day had long been in disrepute throughout Christendom, both as being the day on which the Jews always celebrate their Pasch, and as having been also the time chosen for that festival by the Quartodeciman heretics. But there was this material difference between their practice and that of the Irish, that, while the Jews and Asiatic heretics celebrated Easter always on the fourteenth day of the moon, let it fall on whatever day of the week it might, the Irish never held that festival on the fourteenth, unless it were a Sunday. The Roman missionaries, however, chose to keep the essential difference out of sight; and unjustly confounding the Easter of the Irish with that of the Judaizing Quartodecimans, involved in one common charge of heresy all who still adhered to the old Roman rule.

“With their usual fondness for ancient usages, the Irish persisted in following the former rule; and, in the spirit with which Columbanus, as we have seen, took up the question against the Gallican bishops, he faithfully represented and anticipated the feelings of his fellow-countrymen. The first we hear, however, of the dispute, in Ireland, occurs on the occasion of a letter addressed, in 609, by Laurence, the successor of Augustine and his brother missionaries, to the Irish bishops or abbots. In this Exhortatory Epistle, as Bede styles it, Laurence expresses the disappointment felt by himself and his fellow bishops on finding that the Scots, equally with the Britains, had departed from the universal custom of the church. The warmth with which the dispute was, at this time, entered into by some of the clergy of Ireland, appears, from a circumstance mentioned in this letter, of an Irish bishop, Dagon, who, on visiting the Roman missionaries, refused not only to eat in company with them, but even under the same roof.

"From this period the question seems to have been left open for more than twenty years: some few among the clergy of Ireland being not unwilling, as it seems, to adopt the new Roman discipline; while others thought it sufficient to conform so far to Rome, as to substitute the 16th day of the moon, in their Paschal Canon, for the 14th; and the great bulk of the clergy and people continued attached to their old traditional mode. At length, the attention of the Roman See was, in the year 630, drawn to the dispute; and a letter was addressed by Honorius to the nation of the Scots, in which he earnestly exhorts them 'not to consider their own small number, placed in the utmost borders of the earth, as wiser than all the ancient and modern Churches of Christ throughout the world; nor to continue to celebrate an Easter contrary to the Paschal calculation and to the synodical decrees of all the bishops upon earth.' In consequence of this admonitory letter, a synod was held in Campolene, near Old Leighlin, where it was agreed, after some strenuous opposition from St. Fintan Munnu, of Taghmon, that Easter should, in future, be celebrated at the same time with the universal church. This decree, however, having been rendered abortive by some subsequent intrigue, it was resolved by the elders of the church, that, in pursuance of an ancient canon, by which it was directed that every important ecclesiastical affair should be referred to the Head of Cities, some wise and humble persons should be, on the present occasion, sent to Rome, 'as children to their mother.' A deputation was accordingly despatched to that city, who, on their return within three years after, declared that they had seen, in the see of St. Peter, the Greek, the Hebrew, the Scythian, and the Egyptian, all celebrating the same Easter day, in common with the whole Catholic world, and differing from that of the Irish by an entire month. In consequence of this report of the deputies, which must have been received about the year 633, the new Roman cycle and rules were, from that period, universally adopted throughout the southern division of Ireland.

"However disproportioned to the amount of discussion which it occasioned, was the real importance of the point of discipline now at issue, the effects of the controversy, in as far as it promoted scientific inquiry, and afforded a stimulant to the wits of the disputants, on both sides, could not be otherwise than highly favorable to the advancement of the public mind. The reference to the usages of other countries to which it accustomed the Irish scholars tended, in itself, to enlarge the sphere of their observation and proportionally liberalize their views; nor was it possible to engage in the discussion of a question so closely connected both with astronomy and arithmetic, without some proficiency in those branches of knowledge by which alone it could be properly sifted or judged. Accordingly, while, on one side of the dispute, St. Columbanus supported eloquently the cause of his countrymen, abroad, adducing, in defence of their practice, no less learned authority than that of Anatolius, bishop of Laodicea; at home, another ingenious Irishman, St. Cummian, still more versed in the studies connected with this subject, produced, on the Roman side of the question, such an array

of learning and proofs as would, in any age, have entitled his performance to respect, if not admiration. Enforcing the great argument derived from the unity of the church, which he supports by the authority of all the most ancient fathers, Greek as well as Latin, he passes in review the various cyclical systems that had previously been in use, pointing out their construction and defects, and showing himself acquainted with the chronological characters, both natural and artificial. The various learning, indeed, which this curious tract displays, implies such a facility and range of access to books, as proves the libraries of the Irish students, at that period, to have been, for the times in which they lived, extraordinarily well furnished.

“This eminent man, St. Cummian, who had been one of those most active and instrumental in procuring the adoption of the Roman system by the Irish of the south, and thereby incurred the serious displeasure of the Abbot and Monks of Hy, under whose jurisdiction, as a monk of their order, he was placed, and who continued longer than any other of their monastic brethren to adhere to the old Irish method, in consequence of its having been observed by their venerable founder, St. Columba. In defence of himself and those who agreed with him in opinion, St. Cummian wrote the famous treatise just alluded to, in the form of an Epistle addressed to Segienus, Abbot of Hy; and the learning, ability, and industry with which he has executed his task, must, even by those most inclined to sneer at the literature of that period, be regarded as highly remarkable.

“Though the southern half of Ireland had now received the new Roman method, the question continued to be still agitated in the northern division, where a great portion of the clergy persisted in the old Irish rule; and to the influence exercised over that part of the kingdom by the successors of St. Columba, this perseverance is, in a great measure, to be attributed. It is worthy of remark, however, that notwithstanding the intense eagerness of the contest, not merely in Ireland, but wherever, in Britain, the Irish clergy preached, a spirit of fairness and tolerance was mutually exercised by both parties; nor was the schism of any of those venerable persons who continued to oppose themselves to the Roman system, allowed to interfere with or at all diminish the reverence which their general character for sanctity inspired. Among other instances of this tolerant spirit may be mentioned the tribute of respect paid publicly to St. Fintin Munnu, by his zealous adversary, Laserian, in the course of their contest respecting the new Paschal rule. A yet more historical instance is presented in the case of Aidan, the great apostle of the Northumbrians, who, though a strenuous opponent of the Roman Paschal system, continued to be honored no less in life and after death, by even those persons who had the most vehemently differed with him.

“The connexion of this venerable Irishman, St. Aidan, with the Anglo-Saxon king, Oswald, illustrates too aptly the mutual relations of their respective countries, at this period, to be passed over without some particular notice. During the reign of his uncle Edwin, the young Oswald had lived, an exile, in Ireland, and having been

instructed, while there, in the doctrines of Christianity, resolved, on his accession to the throne, to disseminate the same blessing among his subjects. With this view he applied to the Elders of the Scots, among whom he had himself been taught, desiring that they would furnish him with a bishop, through whose instruction and ministry the nation of the English he had been called to govern, might receive the Christian faith. In compliance with the royal desire, a monk of Hy, named Aidan, was sent; to whom, on his arrival, the king gave, as the seat of his see, the small island of Lindisfarne, or, as it has been since called, Holy Isle. In the spiritual labors of the Saint's mission, the pious Oswald took constantly a share; and it was often, says Bede, a delightful spectacle to witness, that when the bishop, who knew but imperfectly the English tongue, preached the truths of the Gospel, the king himself, who had become master of the Scotie language during his long banishment in Ireland, acted as interpreter of the word of God to his commanders and ministers. From that time, continues the same authority, numbers of Scottish, or Irish, poured daily into Britain, preaching the faith, and administering baptism through all the provinces over which king Oswald reigned. In every direction churches were erected, to which the people flocked with joy to hear the word. Possessions were granted, by royal bounty, for the endowment of monasteries and schools, and the English, old and young, were instructed by their Irish masters in all religious observances.*

“ Having now allowed so long a period of Irish history to elapse, without any reference whatever to the civil transactions of the country, it may naturally be expected that I should for a while digress from ecclesiastical topics, and, leaving the lives of ascetic students, and the dull controversies of the cloister, seek relief from the tame and monotonous level of such details in the stirring achievements of the camp, the feuds of rival chieftains, or even in the pomps and follies of a barbaric court. But the truth is, there exist in the Irish annals no materials for such digression,—the Church forming, throughout these records, not merely, as in the history of most other countries, a branch or episode of the narrative, but its sole object and theme. In so far, indeed, as a quick succession of kings may be thought to enliven history, there occurs no want of such variety in the annals of Ireland; the lists of her kings, throughout the whole

* Exin' cœpere plures per dies de Scotorum regione venire Britanniam atque illis Anglorum provinciis, quibus regnavit rex Osvald, magna devotione verbum Dei prædicare.—*Bede*, lib. iii. cap. 3. “As these preachers, (says Dr. Lanigan) came over from the land of the Scots to Britain, it is plain that they came from Ireland; for the land of the British Scots was itself in Britain; and accordingly Lloyd states, (chap. v. § 5.) that these auxiliaries of Aidan ‘came out of Ireland.’ Thus also Fleury, (lib. xxxviii. § 19.) calls them ‘Missionaires Irelandois.’”—*Ecclesiast. Hist.* chap. xv. note 103.

It was hardly worthy of Doctor Lingard's known character for fairness, to follow the example so far of Dempster, and other such writers, as to call our eminent Irish missionaries, at this period, by the ambiguous name of Scottish monks, without at the same time informing his readers that these distinguished men were Scots of Ireland. The care with which the ecclesiastical historians of France and Italy have in general marked this distinction, is creditable alike to their fairness and their accuracy.

course of the Milesian monarchy, exhibiting but too strongly that unerring mark of a low state of civilization. The time of duration allowed by Newton, in his *Chronology*, to the reigns of monarchs in settled and civilized kingdoms is, at a medium, as much as eighteen years for each reign. In small, uncivilized kingdoms, however, the medium allowed is not more than ten or eleven years; and at this average were the reigns of the kings of Northumbria under the Saxon heptarchy.* What then must be our estimate of the political state of Ireland at this period, when we find that, from the beginning of the reign of Tuathal, A. D. 533, to the time of the great plague, 664, no less than fifteen monarchs had successively filled the Irish throne, making the average of their reigns, during that period, little more than eight years each. With the names of such of these princes as wielded the sceptre since my last notice of the succession, which brought its series down to A. D. 599, it is altogether unnecessary to encumber these pages; not one of them having left more than a mere name behind, and, in general, the record of their violent deaths being the only memorial that tells of their ever having lived.

“In order to convey to the reader any adequate notion of the apostolical labors of that crowd of learned missionaries whom Ireland sent forth, in the course of this century, to all parts of Europe, it would be necessary to transport him to the scenes of their respective missions; to point out the difficulties they had to encounter, and the admirable patience and courage with which they surmounted them; to show how inestimable was the service they rendered, during that dark period, by keeping the dying embers of learning awake, and how gratefully their names are enshrined in the records of foreign lands, though but faintly, if at all, remembered in their own. It was, indeed, then, as it has been ever since, the peculiar fate of Ireland, that both in talent, and the fame that honorably rewards it, her sons prospered far more triumphantly abroad than at home; for while, of the many who confined their labors to their native land, but few have left those remembrances behind which constitute fame, those who carried the light of their talent and zeal to other lands, not only founded a lasting name for themselves, but made their country also a partaker of their renown, winning for her that noble title of the Island of the Holy and the Learned, which, throughout the night that overhung all the rest of Europe, she so long and proudly wore. Thus, the labors of the great missionary, St. Columbanus, were, after his death, still vigorously carried on, both in France and Italy, by those disciples who had accompanied or joined him from Ireland; and his favorite Gallus, to whom, in dying, he bequeathed his pastoral staff, became the founder of an abbey in Switzerland, which was in the thirteenth century erected into a principedom, while the territory belonging to it has, through

* To judge from the following picture, however, their state was little better than that of the Irish:—“During the last century, (the eighth) Northumbria had exhibited successive instances of treachery and murder to which no other country perhaps can furnish a parallel. Within the lapse of a hundred years, fourteen kings had assumed the sceptre, and yet of all these, one only, if one, died in the peaceable possession of royalty: seven had been slain, six had been driven from the throne by their rebellious subjects.”

all changes, borne the name of St. Gall.* From his great assiduity in promulgating the Gospel, and training up disciples capable of succeeding him in the task, this pious Irishman has been called, by a foreign martyrologist, the Apostle of the Allemanian nation. Another disciple and countryman of St. Columbanus, named Deicola, or in Irish Dichuill, enjoyed, like his master, the patronage and friendship of the monarch Clotaire II., who endowed the monastic establishment formed by him at Luthra, with considerable grants of land.

"In various other parts of France, similar memorials of Irish sanctity may be traced. At the celebrated monastery of Centula, in Ponthied, was seen a tomb, engraved with golden letters, telling that there lay the remains of the venerable priest, Caidoc, "to whom Ireland gave birth, and the Gallic land a grave."† The site of the hermitage of St. Fiacre, another Irish Saint, was deemed so consecrated a spot, that to go on a pilgrimage thither was, to a late period, a frequent practice among the devout; and we are told of the pious Anne of Austria, that when, in 1641, she visited the shrine of this Saint, so great was the humility of her devotion, that she went the whole of the way, from Monceau to the town of Fiacre, on foot. Among the number of holy and eminent Irishmen who thus extended their labours to France, must not be forgotten St. Fursa,‡ who, after preaching among the East Angles, and converting many from Paganism, passed over into France; and, building a monastery at Lagny, near the river Marne, remained there, spreading around him the blessings of religious instruction, till his death.

"In like manner, through most of the other countries of Europe, we hear of the progress of some of these adventurous spirits, and track the course of their fertilizing footsteps through the wide waste of ignorance and paganism which then prevailed.§ In Brabant, the

* In speaking of the learning displayed by St. Cummian in his famous Letter on the Paschal question, I took occasion to remark on the proof which it affords of the existence of libraries, at that period, in Ireland, and by no means ill or scantily furnished. From a circumstance mentioned by the ecclesiastical historians of an Irish bishop, named Mark, who visited the monastery of St. Gall, about the middle of the ninth century, it would appear that the Irish were, at that time, even able to contribute to the libraries of their fellow countrymen on the Continent.

† Mole sub hac tegitur Caidocus jure sacerdos,

Scotia quem genuit, Gallica terra tegit.

The burial-place of this Saint, who died at Centula, towards the middle of the seventh century, was repaired by Angilbert, abbot of that monastery, in the reign of Charlemagne, when the epitaph from which the above couplet is cited, was inscribed upon the tomb.

‡ This Saint was of royal descent:—"Erat autem vir ille de nobilissimo genere Scotorum."—*Bede*, l. iii. c. 19. In the same chapter will be found an account of those curious visions or revelations of St. Fursa, which are supposed by the Benedictines to have been intended to shadow forth the political and moral corruption of the higher orders in Ireland:—"On s'apperceoit sans peine qu'elles tendent a reprimer les desordres qui regnoient alors parmi les Princes, les Eveques, et les autres ecclesiastiques d'Hibernie, ou le saint les avoit eues. Elles taxent principalement leur avarice, leur oisivete, le peu de soin qu'ils prenoient de s'instruire et d'instruire les autres."

§ "In the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries (says Macpherson), religion and learning flourished in Ireland to such a degree, that it was commonly styled the mother country of Saints, and reputed the kingdom of arts and sciences. The

brothers of St. Furso, Ultan and Foillan, founded an establishment which was long called the Monastery of the Irish; and the elegant scholar, St. Livin, whom, by his own verses, we trace to the tomb of St. Bavo,* in Ghent, proceeded from thence, on a spiritual mission, through Flanders and Brabant, prepared at every step for that crown of martyrdom, which at length, from the hands of Pagans he suffered. With the same enterprising spirit we find St. Fridolin, surnamed the Traveller,—a native it is supposed, of Connaught,—exploring the Rhine for some uninhabited island, and at length fixing himself upon Seckingen, where he founded a church, and a religious house for females, which he lived to see prosper under his own eyes. Next to the generous self-devotion of these holy adventurers, thus traversing alone the land of the infidel and the stranger, the feeling of gratitude with which after-ages have clung to their names, forms one of the most pleasing topics of reflection which history affords; and few, if any, of our Irish missionaries left behind them more grateful recollections than, for centuries, consecrated every step of the course of Fridolin the Traveller, through Lorraine, Alsace, Germany, and Switzerland.

* * * * *

“Bede mentions also, in the number of sufferers by the plague, some natives of England, both noble and of lower rank, who had retired to Ireland, as he expresses it, “to pursue a course of sacred studies, and lead a stricter life.” It is in mentioning this interesting fact, that the historian adds, so honorably to the Irish, that they most cheerfully received all these strangers, and supplied them gratuitously with food, with books, and instruction.†

“While thus from England such numbers crowded to these shores, and either attached themselves to a monastic life, or visited the cells of the different monasteries in pursuit of general knowledge, Irish scholars were, with a similar view, invited into Britain. The Island of Hy, which was inhabited by Irish monks, furnished teachers to all the more northern regions; and the appointment of three natives of Ireland, in succession, to the new see of Lindisfarne, proves how grateful a sense of the services of that nation the Northumbrian princes of this period entertained. At the time we are speaking of, the bishop of this see was Colman, a monk of the Columbian order, who had been sent from Ireland for the purpose of filling that high dignity. Like all the rest of the clergy of his order, he adhered to the Irish mode of celebrating Easter, and the dispute respecting that point received a new recruitment of force from his ac-

Saxons and Angles sent thither many of their princes and princesses to have the benefit of a pious and learned education. It ought, likewise, to be acknowledged, that some of the most eminent teachers of North Britain received their instruction at the Irish seminaries of literature and religion.”

* The epitaph which this Saint wrote upon St. Bavo, and the epistle addressed by him to his friend Florbert, in sending him the epitaph, may both be found in Usher's *Vet. Epist. Hiberniarum Sylloge*. Of these two poems, Dr. Lanigan remarks, that they “are very neat compositions, and do great honour to the classical taste of the Irish schools of that period, while barbarism prevailed in the greatest part of Western Europe.”—Chap. vi. § 12.

† On this, Ledwich remarks:—“So zealous and disinterested a love of learning is unparalleled in the annals of the world.”

cession, as well as from the scruples of the intelligent Alchfrid, son of king Oswin, who, while his father, a convert and pupil of the Irish, "saw nothing better," says Bede, "than what they taught," was inclined to prefer to their traditions the canonical practice now introduced from Rome.* In consequence of the discussions to which this difference gave rise, a memorable conference was held on the subject, at Whitby; where, in the presence of the two kings, Oswin and Alchfrid, the arguments of each party were temperately and learnedly brought forward; the bishop Colman, with his Irish clergy, speaking in defence of the old observances of their country, while Wilfrid, a learned priest, who had been recently to Rome, undertook to prove the truth and universality of the Roman method. The scene of the controversy was in a monastery, or nunnery, over which Hilda, a distinguished abbess, presided,—herself and all her community being favourers, we are told, of the Irish system. The debate was carried on in Irish and Anglo-Saxon, the venerable Cead, an English bishop, acting as interpreter between the parties; and the whole proceeding but wanted a worthier or more important subject of discussion to render it, in no ordinary degree, striking and interesting.†

"After speeches and replies on both sides, of which Bede has preserved the substance, the king and the assembly at large agreed to give their decision in favour of Wilfrid; and Colman, silenced but not convinced, resolving still to adhere to the tradition of his fathers, resigned the see of Lindisfarne, and returned to his home in Ireland, taking along with him all the Irish monks, and about thirty of the English, belonging to that establishment.‡

"The great mistake which pervaded the arguments of the Roman party, upon this question, lay in their assumption—whether wilfully or from ignorance—that the method of computation which they had introduced was the same that Rome had practised from the very commencement of her church; whereas, it was not till the middle of the fifth century that the Romans themselves were induced, for the sake of peace and unity, to exchange their old cycle of eighty-

* An edifying instance of the tolerance of that period is afforded in the following fact, mentioned by Bede:—The Queen of Eanfled, who had lived in Kent, and who had with her a Kentish priest, named Romanus, followed the Roman Easter, while the King Oswin celebrated the Irish Easter; and it sometimes happened, says Bede, that while the king, bishop, &c. were enjoying the Paschal festivity, the queen and her followers were still fasting the Lent.

† Among other persons present at the discussion, was Agilbert, a native of France, who, for the purpose of studying the Scriptures, as Bede tells us, had passed a considerable time in Ireland. "Venit in provinciam de Hibernia pontifex quidam, nomine Agilberctus, natione quidem Gallus, sed tunc legendarum gratia Scripturarum in Hibernia non parvo tempore demoratus."—Lib. iii. c. 7.

‡ To the monastery built by Colman for his English followers, at Mayo, (Bede, l. iv. c. 4.) a number of other monks of that nation attached themselves; and, in the time of Adamnan, towards the close of the seventh century, there were about one hundred Saxon or English saints at that place, which, from thence, was called by the name of *Maigh-eona-Sasson*, or Mayo of the English. For this fact, Usher refers to the book of Ballimote:—"Quo in loco, uti Bedæ, ælate grande Anglorum fuisse monasterium audivimus, ita etiam S. Cormaci, et Adamnani tempore *centum Saxoniorum Sanctorum* fuisse habitaculum, libri Ballimotensis collector confirmat."—*Eccles. Primord.*

four years for a new Paschal system. By another gross error of the same party, which seems also liable to the suspicion of having been wilful, the Easter of the Irish was confounded with the Quartodeciman Pasch, though between the two observances, as we have already seen, there was an essential difference.* But the fundamental error of both parties in the contest was, the importance attached unduly by each of them to a point of mere astronomical calculation, unconnected with either faith or morals; and while the Irish were, no doubt, censurable for persisting with so much obstinacy in a practice which, besides being indifferent in itself, was at variance with the general usage of Christendom, their opponents were no less to be blamed for their want of charity and good sense in raising, on so slight a point of difference and discipline, the cry of heresy and schism.

“A dispute of a still more trifling nature, and bordering closely, it must be owned, on the ridiculous, was, by the English followers of the Roman missionaries, mixed up, throughout, with the Paschal question, and, in a subordinate degree, made to share its fortunes. This dispute related to the tonsure, or mode of shaving the head, practised respectively by the Roman and Irish clergy: the former of whom shaved or clipped the crown of the head, leaving the hair to grow in a circle all round it; while the Irish, allowing the hair to cover the back of the head, shaved or clipped it away, in the form of a crescent, from the front. Both parties, with equal confidence and, it may be added, ignorance, appealed to antiquity in support of their respective tonsures; while, on the part of the Irish, the real motive for clinging so fondly to their old custom was, that it had been introduced among them, with all their other ecclesiastical rules and usages, by the national apostle, St. Patrick. According as their Paschal rule, however, gave way, this form of the tonsure followed its fate; and in a Canon, the date of which is supposed to be about the seventh or eighth century, we find an order for the observance of the Roman tonsure.”

CHAPTER LIV.

The accession of Congall, son of Feargus, to the Throne;—succeeded by Fearghall, who demands the Leinster tribute, and endeavours to exact its payment by force of arms,—is defeated and killed in battle by the Leinsterians.—The reign of Fogartach, who abdicates the throne, and retires to a Monastery.—His successor Aodh Ollah.—The synod of Firdalgas.—Battle of Athseanuigh.—Accession of Daniel III.—The Picts invade Leinster;—A war waged between Munster and Leinster.—The reign of Nial II;—he is succeeded by Donachad.

CONGALL was elevated to the throne, in consequence of the victory which he and his ally Ceallach obtained over the late monarch,

* Inheriting fully the same perverse feeling against the Irish, Dr. Ledwich has, in the same manner, misrepresented them on this subject; endeavouring to make out that St. Columba and his successors were all Quartodecimans. See an able refutation of his views on this point by Dr. Lanigan, chap. xii. note 236.

Loingseach. Some of our historians represent him as an oppressor of his people, and a persecuter of the church, while others paint his character in the brilliant colours of mercy, justice, and clemency. The English historian of Ireland, Dr. WARNER, in allusion to the events occurring in the reign of that monarch, says, with a show of reason and truth, that "one would imagine as christianity had been planted, then, in Ireland almost three centuries, and had met with marvellous success, that a Pagan could scarcely have been found among men of rank and education, in any part of the Island. Much less would one imagine that a Pagan prince should have any chance of mounting the throne of Ireland, where the monarch was elected, without any regard to primogeniture, and hereditary right,—and where the mass of the people had long been christians." The opinion of Dr. Warner is founded on, we think, strong grounds of probability; for Congall might be a christian prince, and yet be stimulated by the lust of avarice, and the pride of power, to plunder abbeys, and to exercise despotism over the clergy. At this period of piety and religious devotion, it should be considered, when the power of the Catholic clergy reached the very acme of an overwhelming influence in Ireland, it is, in our opinion, indeed extremely improbable that Congall should have dared to despoil abbeys, or oppress priests. Dr. Keating characterises him as a cruel tyrant, and a ferocious oppressor of the ministers of the gospel; but he does not charge him with paganism:

After a reign of seven years, Congall died a peaceable and natural death. He was succeeded by prince Fearghall, of the dynasty of Heremon. In the early part of his reign, the Welsh and Picts invaded the northern coast of Ireland;—but before they had time to commit many predatory excesses, they were bravely attacked by the Ultonians, at a place called *Clogh-Mimiure*, in the County of Derry, and completely, after a fierce contest, overthrown and put to flight. That invasion took place, A. D. 713.

The next event of the reign of Fearghall that demands commemoration, is the attempt made by this prince, in contravention of the compact entered into by his predecessor, Fionachta, with St. Moling, to exact the payment of the Leinster tribute. Murrough Mac Brian, the then King of Leinster, indignantly refused the requisition of the monarch, and resolved to try the fortune of a war. The contending parties consequently, came to battle, at Almhuin, in the County of Wicklow, in which the forces of the monarch was vanquished and himself slain. The next monarch was Fogartach, who had scarcely reigned a year when he fell in battle by the hand of his successor, Cionaoth, who in his turn, was killed, A. D. 724, by his successor, Flabhertach, at the conflict of Drom Curan. Ulster, at this epoch of our history, was subject to prince *Aodh Roin*, who made himself abhorred and execrated by the nefarious acts of persecution, plunder, and sacrilege, which he committed on his principality.

"The consecrated vessels," writes McDermott, "were sacrilegiously torn out of the churches by his adherents, till Aodh Ollah, a religious prince, stimulated by his confessor, Congus, who was then

primate of all Ireland, espoused the cause of the church. He invaded Ulster, and engaged the forces of Aodh-Roin, at Murtheimne, in the County of Louth, where the king of Ulster was defeated, and slain on the field of battle." After the monarch Flabhertach had wielded the sceptre for a period of seven years, he became a religious devotee, and impelled by his pious zeal, he abdicated his throne in favour of his cousin, Aodh-Ollah, the conqueror of the impious king of Ulster, and retired to the abbey of Armagh, to consecrate the remainder of his days to prayer and penance. Here he resided for twenty-six years of his life of sanctity and devotion, and died in A. D. 760.

At the lapse of two years after the accession of Aodh-Ollah, an ecclesiastical synod was convened at Firdaglas, (the country of the two greens) County of Tipperary,* which the monarch attended, as well as Cathal, king of Munster, and several other princes.

"The object of this meeting," writes one of the Irish historians, "was to enforce the regular payment of those church dues, which were known throughout Europe, by the name of '*Peter's pence*,' but which, in Ireland, were paid to the See of Armagh. The payment of these dues were neglected for a considerable time, but were now established under the sanction of the ecclesiastical and civil powers."

In the course of two years after the meeting of that synod, a war broke out between the kings of Leinster and Munster. What the subject of hostilities was, has not been transmitted to us by the Irish historians; let it, however, suffice to state, that both parties agreed to abide by the result of a battle which was fought at Ballach-Feile, in Upper Ossory, Queen's County. Victory declared itself for the Mamonians, or people of Munster. The monarch, ungenerously taking advantage of the feebleness to which defeat and distress had reduced the king of Leinster, marched against him, at the head of a formidable force. They came to an engagement at Athseanuigh, in the County of Wexford, in which the troops of the king of Leinster were cut to pieces, and himself, while gallantly leading on his guards, slain. It was, however, a dear-bought triumph for Aodh-Ollah, as several thousands of his army were killed, amongst whom was his son Aodh. The loss which the monarch sustained, in this bloody battle, encouraged prince Daniel, the son of Mortough, and the eleventh in descent from "Nial of the nine hostages," to raise the banner of insurrection, and to assail the forces of Aodh-Ollah with the fiercest elements of war. In the battle which ensued, the monarch was vanquished and killed, which paved the way for Daniel to the throne, which he ascended A. D. 743.

Daniel is known, in our annals, as the third Irish King of that name. "During his reign," writes Dr. O'Halloran, "Leinster was invaded by the Picts, under the command of Cathasagh, son of Ollilla, their king. The Lagenians engaged them in the battle of

* FIRDAGLAS is situated in the barony of lower Ormand, County of Tipperary, in the midst of a fine and fertile country. An abbey was erected here, in the beginning of the seventh century, by St. Colman, the first Bishop of Cloyne, in the County of Cork. The abbey was destroyed by fire in the year 1140.

Rath-Beotach, where the Picts were defeated, and their General slain.

Hostilities were soon after commenced, once more, between the Lagenians and Mamonians, and a battle fought at Tob-air-Fionn, (the white well) and so great was the carnage, on both sides, that the spring, with the road and lake adjoining, was discoloured with blood,—whence the site of the battle was afterwards known by the name of Cathbeallagh-cro, or the conflict of the sanguinary way. The monarch seems to have been a tame and inactive spectator of these bloody scenes;—and given up to a religious turn, attended more to litanies and processions, than to feats of arms. After a rule of twenty years, he made a pilgrimage to the abbey of Hy-Iona, in Scotland, where he ended his days in great piety and resignation.”

He was succeeded, on the throne, by Nial, the second son of the monarch, Fearghall, in the year 763. “This reign,” observes McDermott, “was distinguished by three miraculous showers;—one of blood, at Magh-Laighion,—one of honey, at Fothan-beg,—and one of silver, at Fothanmore. These showers are mentioned in the book of reigns, and in the annals of Tighernach, written in the eleventh century, and Mac Curtain, who was not forty years dead, when O’Halloran wrote his history of Ireland, affirms, that bits of fine silver, called twelve grain pennies, were then in being, and supposed to be part of this money.” Although we are an enthusiastic advocate for our historical system,—a system so healthy and flourishing in the full bloom of truth and reason, that the few funguses of bardic fiction, which grow upon its massy and majestic trunk, cannot debase or decay it,—yet we must candidly avow that we do sincerely think that the above-mentioned preternatural showers never fell on the Irish soil; for any man of reasoning inquiry will ascribe such an unnatural phenomenon to its true source—poetic imagination. But we concur in the justness of the opinion expressed by the Roman annalist, Salust, that it is the duty of every historian to relate and record such occurrences as his predecessors, in the chair of history, have put forth on the ground of facts. It is under the impression, therefore, of the Roman historian’s opinion, that we deem it our duty to quote Dr. O’Halloran’s remarks on the supernatural subject just alluded to. He says, “very many uncommon phenomena seemed to predict the approaching miseries of Ireland. In the reign of Aodh Slaine, the appearance of fleets and armies was seen in the skies; in those of his immediate successors, monstrous serpents seemed to float in the air. The fall of blood in the present time, seemed to announce their nearer approach; this was followed by dreadful earthquakes in different parts of the kingdom,—and to these succeeded so great a famine, as to carry off numbers of the inhabitants. The good monarch, shocked at such accumulated miseries, resigned the crown, and retired to the abbey of Hy, where, after eight years spent in remarkable piety and austerity, he resigned his life for a better, and was interred there, in the same vault with his predecessor.”

The successor, on the throne, to Nial, was Donachad, the son of the monarch Daniel. Of the events of his reign, which lasted

twenty-seven years, we have no historical relation. It is conjectured by our most creditable historians, that the manuscript which narrated the transactions of Donachad's regal sway, was burned, with many other of our national records, by the devastating Danes, whose barbarous and Gothic policy it was to destroy every memorial of Milesian greatness and grandeur, and to "obliterate every trace and recollection of ancient times." On the death of Donachad A. D. 797, his cousin, Aodh the VI., was elected monarch of Ireland. The history of his memorable reign will occupy one of our future chapters.

CHAPTER LV.

The question discussed,—whether the Catholic Religion, established by St. Patrick, was the same in principle, tenor, and doctrine, as that now professed and practiced by the Roman Catholics of Ireland?

WE think that there never was written an abler or a more convincing refutation of the absurd and unfounded assertions of those who have endeavoured to maintain the groundless opinion, that the religion first introduced into Ireland, by St. Patrick, was not under the ecclesiastical control of the Pope, than that which M'DERMOTT furnishes in the following observations,—observations that are not only powerful in argument, luminous in diction, but forcible in logical deduction, and overwhelming in their invincible array of unquestionable facts.

He says, "in taking a retrospective view of the state and progress of religion in Ireland since the establishment of christianity by St. Patrick; we are aware that to the generality of readers, ecclesiastical has much less of interest and importance than civil history. Yet as both seem to be so intimately blended, that we cannot be perfectly acquainted with the one while we are totally ignorant of the other. The history of a people, at least that part of it which makes us acquainted with their manners, habits, and opinions, is best collected from a knowledge of their religion. He who holds with the Epicurean moralist, that this is the reign of pleasure and enjoyment, and he who believes with the christian divine, that it is only a passage to a future state, where our happiness or misery is to be determined by our merits or demerits on earth, will not only act and think differently, but present to the historian a political aspect, shaded by colours that are perfectly distinct and different from each other.

It has been asserted by Archbishop Usher, and Dr. Ledwich, that the Catholic religion was not that originally preached and established in Ireland. The arguments urged by Usher in determining this question have been examined and rejected by F. Malone, a contemporary writer; in this controversy, Malone was so successful in proving his point, that the R. James Usher, a descendant of the

Archbishop, afterwards became a proselyte to the Catholic religion, by the perusal of his work. We shall, however, state the arguments made use of by Usher and Ledwich on the one side, and by Dr. Milner, who maintains that the Catholic religion was the first established in Ireland, on the other, and thus enable the reader to form his own opinion on the merits of the question.

“In treating,” says Dr. Milner, “of the important subject of antiquity, which I announced at the conclusion of my last letter, I have to combat two principal adversaries; persons of very different characters, attainments, and systems, but, nevertheless, combined together in the same cause, that of robbing the Irish Catholics of their ancient faith. These persons are Archbishop Usher and Dr. Ledwich. They both maintain, that the original christianity of Ireland was not Catholic, but rather the reverse of it. They are, however, very different and inconsistent in their stories with respect to the source and nature of this christianity, as will appear from the following abstract of their respective systems. What Archbishop Usher says is, in substance, this: ‘Unquestionably there was a missionary from Rome, of the name of Patrick, who, together with his disciples, converted the greater part of our Irish ancestors from paganism to christianity, about the middle of the fifth century. All history attests it, and it would be madness to deny it. But I can prove from the very acts of this apostle, from venerable Bede, and other ancient doctors of the church, that the religion then imported by St. Patrick was different in its essential parts, from that professed by the Catholics at the present time.’ On the other hand, Dr. Ledwich exclaims: ‘Away with the phantoms invented by confederated monks of the ninth century, in imitation of Mars, Minerva, and Juno. There never was such a man at all as St. Patrick, the apostle of Ireland; and it is certain that the Irish were converted to a religion the very reverse of popery, by some unknown preachers from Asia, long before the fifth century, when he is supposed to have lived; which pure religion continued in Ireland down to the year 1152. As to Ware, Harris, and Primate Usher, they had not even a tolerable idea of our original episcopacy;* and when they appeal to the testimony of Bede and the English Saxon church, in opposition to popery, they appeal to acknowledged papists.’ I shall first pay attention to the arguments of the Archbishop, as they are detailed by Harris: after which I shall again notice the declamations of Ledwich:† the occasion, however, requires that I should compress both the former and the latter, together with my answers, into the narrowest compass possible.

“I. It is urged by Usher, that the christianity which prevailed in the age of St. Patrick, and a considerable time afterwards, could not be the religion of modern Catholics, because the poet Sedulius, in the fifth century, and our venerable Bede in the eighth, strongly recommended the reading of the holy scriptures. But does the Catholic church, in these times, forbid the reading of them? So

* See *Antiquit.* p. 87.

† See a Dissertation annexed to the *Life of St. Patrick*.

far from that, she imposes a strict obligation of reading them upon all her clergy, and she interdicts the practice to none of her children; she only expresses a desire, that they who apply to it, may have some small previous tincture of literature, or, at least, that they may be possessed of docile and humble minds, so as to be willing to admit her interpretation of the many things *hard to be understood*,* which occur in them. In the mean time, I might quote whole volumes of passages from the fathers† and councils‡ of the church, belonging to the ages in question, by way of proving that they admitted certain unwritten apostolical traditions as the word of God, equally with the written bible, and that they unanimously rejected from their communions, as *heathens and publicans*, all those who *refused to hear the church* in her decisions.§ II. It is objected by Usher, that what is called St. Patrick's purgatory was not instituted by the saint of that name. This I readily grant;|| but if he argues from thence, that St. Patrick and the early christians did not believe in a middle state of souls after death, which may be assisted by the prayers of living christians, he is guilty of an error both in reasoning and in fact. It will be seen in this saint's second council, that he forbids the holy sacrifice to be offered up for those persons after their death who had rendered themselves unworthy to have it offered up for them in their lifetime.¶ It will not be disputed that the writings of Bede abound with testimonies in favour of prayers for the dead, of purgatory, &c.** and it is a fact that he himself, when he came to die, earnestly desired that prayers and masses might be offered up for him.†† III. It is said that St. Patrick condemned the worship of images. True, he condemned and extirpated the use of pagan idols; but here is not the shadow of an argument to shew that he deviated from the received doctrine and practice of the universal church, with respect to the paying a proper reverence to the cross of Christ, his image, or the images or relics of the martyrs and saints, or with respect to the pious usage of desiring the saints to offer up prayers for us. At the time when St.

* 2 Pet. iii. 16.

† See in particular amongst St. Patrick's contemporaries, St. Basil, Lib. de Spir. S. c. 27. St. John Chrys. in Orat. 4. in Epist. ad Thesal. and St. Vincent of Lerins, in the whole of his golden work, called, "Commonitorium adversus profanas Hæreseon novitates."

‡ See in particular the speech of St. Wilfrid, commended by Bede, Hist. l. iii. c. 27. also the decrees of the synods of Herudford, l. iv. c. 5. and of Hedfield, l. vi. c. 17. Sir Richard Musgrave, referring to the assertions of Usher, which he recommends to the consideration of Catholics, takes upon himself to assert, that "until Archbishop Anselm's time, (namely, the 12th century) the Irish clergy were totally ignorant of the councils of the church, and derived their knowledge of christianity for near 800 years from no other source but the bible. Memoirs of the Rebellion, p. 2. It is not by way of entering into a controversy upon ecclesiastical matters with Sir R. Musgrave that I notice this revolting falsehood, but only by way of shewing Sir Richard's propensity to assert with the utmost confidence facts of which he is totally ignorant.

§ Mat. xviii. 17.

|| It was set on foot by an Abbot Patrick several ages later, and was once suppressed by an order of the Pope, namely, in 1497.

¶ 2 Concil. S. Patricii, cap. 12. Spelman. Concil. p. 57.

** Hist. l. iv. c. 22. l. ii. c. 19.

†† Cuthbert in Vit. Bed. Act. Bened. tom. iii.

Patrick arrived in Ireland, he saw the cross of Christ exalted upon the imperial standards, and he left the great doctors of christianity, a Chrysostome, an Augustine, a Prosper, and a Leo, bearing ample testimony to the piety and utility of all these practices.* He himself is recorded as bringing over relics into these islands,† as Usher acknowledges St. Palladius did before him.‡ With respect to our native historian and theologian, venerable Bede, whom Usher appeals to, he describes St. Augustine of Canterbury preaching the gospel to king Ethelbert, with the cross for an ensign, and the figure of Christ for an emblem;§ he represents the same saint consecrating pagan temples with holy water and relics,|| and offering up homage to God by the sacrifice of the mass.¶ With respect to images in particular, venerable Bede proves that God did not interdict the total use of them, by his commanding the figures of cherubim and oxen to be placed in the temple: ‘for certainly,’ he adds, ‘if it was lawful to make twelve oxen of brass to support the brazen sea, it cannot be amiss to paint the twelve apostles going to preach to all nations.’** IV. We are told that the liturgy of St. Patrick differed from that of the Roman church. It is not, however, proved to have differed, in the smallest tittle, from that which was followed at Rome when St. Patrick received his mission; much less is it proved to have deviated in any point which is essential to the nature of the sacraments and sacrifice of the church in all ages and countries. That the Catholic liturgies of all times and countries have been essentially the same in this respect, is abundantly proved by divines and canonists.†† Nevertheless, it is to be remarked that a certain latitude in mere ceremonies and particular devotions, has always been allowed to great or national churches, under the regulation of their head pastors. St. Gregory permitted our apostle, St. Augustine, to adopt any usages of this nature for the infant church of the English, which he might choose to borrow from the French or other Catholic nations;‡‡ and the court of Rome, at the present day, so far from requiring the orthodox Greeks, who have colleges there, to conform to her ritual in these unessential points, obliges them to adhere to their own. V. It appears that the mass was sometimes, in former ages, said by the Irish clergy at night. So it was, in the same ages, and on the same occasions, namely, on the eves of certain great festivals, by the clergy of every other Catholic country. It is still said by us at midnight on Christmas night. In the mean time, we learn from Bede, that nine of the clock in the morning was the usual time of saying it.§§ VI. Bede and Cogitosus speak of ‘the sacrament of the Lord’s body and blood:’ whence it appears that the sacrament was in ancient times administered in both kinds. I answer, that the Catholics use the same language at the present day, though the laity receive the sacrament only under

* See the Liturgy of St. Chrysost. Aug. Serm. 25, de Sanctis, &c. Prosper de Vita Contemplat. c. 4. Leo Serm. de S. Vinc.

† Jocelin, cap. 166.

‡ Primord, p. 812.

§ Lib. i. c. 25.

|| Lib. i. c. 26.

¶ Lib. i. c. 30.

** De Templo Salom. cap. 19.

†† See Explication de la Messe, par le Brun, Goarius, Marinus, &c.

‡‡ Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 27.

§§ Hora tertia. Hist. Eccl. l. iv. c. 22.

one kind; that the difference of receiving it under one or under both kinds, is a mere point of discipline, which may be, and has been, changed, as the circumstances of time and place required; and that, nevertheless, the present practice of the church, in communicating to the laity under the form of bread alone, was the practice of our infant English church, as appears from Bede himself.* In the mean time, we are to observe that this illustrious doctor of the English church, at the beginning of the ninth century, expressly teaches, not only that the mass is a true sacrifice, in which Christ is truly and really present, but also, that a true and proper change or transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ takes place in it. I will transcribe his words in the margin, and I defy the subtlety of the most ingenious controvertist of your acquaintance to give them any other meaning than that which I have assigned.† VII. Archbishop Lanfranc complains, that the Irish neglected the use of chrism in baptism, or did not make use of it in a proper manner, and that a single bishop amongst them was accustomed to consecrate another bishop, without the presence of two others, as the council of Nice requires. But what trifling, Sir, is this! For since it is evident that Lanfranc did not, on this account, deny the validity of the Irish baptisms and orders; and since both Catholics and Protestants are agreed that chrism is not essential to baptism, nor the presence of three bishops to consecration, it is plain that the diversity in question neither was, nor was considered to be, a sufficient ground for the rest of the church to break off communion with the prelates of this island. VIII. In order to prove that the clergy were permitted in ancient times to marry, and that therefore the church then was upon a different footing from what it is now, Archbishop Usher mentions that St. Patrick was the son of the deacon Calphurnius, who himself was the son of the priest Potitus. I answer, that if the learned primate had acted fairly by his readers, he would have informed them that the same author who mentions these particulars concerning St. Patrick's family, expressly tells us that the children of Calphurnius and Potitus were born *previously to their fathers' ordination*.

* See the History of the Sons of Sabereth, l. ii. c. 5.

† "Lavet nos (Christus) a peccatis nostris quotidie in sanguine suo, cum ejusdem beatæ passionis memoria ad altare replicatur, cum panis et vini creaturam sacramentum carnis et sanguinis ejus, ineffabili spiritus sanctificatione TRANSFERTUR: sicque corpus et sanguis illius non infidelium manibus ad perniciem ipsorum funditur, et occiditur, sed fidelium, ore, suam sumitur ad salutem." Bed. Hom. in Epiph. tom. 7. As the doctrine of the eastern church is particularly implicated in the present controversy, I shall select, from among scores of other testimonies relating to it, a passage from the catechetical discourses of a holy father who was bishop of the primitive church of Jerusalem in the fourth century: "The bread and wine of the eucharist, before the invocation of the adorable Trinity, were mere bread and wine; but that invocation having taken place, the bread becomes the body of Christ, and the wine becomes the blood of Christ. Since, then, Christ thus declares concerning the bread: THIS IS MY BODY, who can doubt any longer? And since he confirms what he said, and declares THIS IS MY BLOOD, who will dare to hesitate, and affirm that it is not his blood?" He once changed water into wine, which resembles blood, at Cana in Galilee: and is he not worthy to be believed, when he says that he changes wine into blood?" &c. St. Cyril of Jerusal. Catech. Mystagog. i. See also the Liturgy of St. Basil, and of St. Chrys. in Le Brun, &c.

To prevent being obliged to return again to the same subject, I shall take notice here of some of the extravagant assertions of Dr. Ledwich, on the subject of clerical and monastic celibacy. He asserts, that the ancient Irish ascetics, called Culdees, were married;* and he appeals to an authority in support of his assertion. But what, Sir, do you think, is this authority? It is the *bare word* of the profligate and deistical writer of the *last century*, Toland! Such is the 'enlightened criticism' of this vaunting antiquary of Ireland! To be sure, a monastery of 3000 monks, as was that of Benchor under St. Comgall,† with each one a wife and family, was admirably calculated for the observance of those austere rules of obedience, silence, abstemiousness, poverty, &c. which Dr. Ledwich admits them to have practised; having borrowed them, he tells us, not from the christian *monks* of Egypt, but from the more ancient *heathen priests* of Egypt! So desirous is he of making a confused medley of christianity and paganism!‡ Three thousand monks in a monastery with their wives and families! How far will the impositions of some men go, and the credulity of others! He says, however, that 'when it came to their turn to officiate, they did not cohabit with their wives; as by the 28th canon of the African code, subdeacons, who handle the holy mysteries, deacons, priests, and bishops are directed, at their several terms, to abstain from their wives: a practice derived from Egypt to the Jews, and from them adopted by the christians. Celibacy was unknown for the first three hundred years of the church.'§ What a mass of misrepresentation and falsehood is here heaped together! In the first place, by Ledwich's own account, the monks in general, and the Culdees in particular, 'had no office in the church; even the abbots had not priesthood till the 12th century.'|| St. Columba is mentioned as an exception to this rule. Hence their 'turn to officiate, according to this author himself, never came round.' The writer equally imposes upon those who trust to him, in what he says about the derivation of clerical continency from pagan priests. If those illustrious prelates who framed the African code, Aurelius, St. Augustine, St. Alypius, &c. to whose authority he has just now appealed, are to be believed, this observance is derived from *the apostles*."

"Having undertaken so desperate a cause, as that of proving the religion of St. Patrick and his converts not to have been the Catholic, no wonder Archbishop Usher, with all his talents, should have failed in it; no wonder his adversary F. Malone, having the works of the fathers at his elbow, should have gained so decided a victory over him, and that the perusal of their respective writings should have determined the Archbishop's descendant, the reverend James Usher, to become a Catholic, as I have related in one of my first letters to you. The most important however, of Usher's objections, remains to be examined: he denies that St. Patrick and his disciples acknowledged the Pope's spiritual primacy. If this be true, undoubtedly their religion was not Catholic; for it is their union with the successor of St. Peter, as their visible head here upon earth,

* Antiq. p. 111. † Ibid. p. 90. ‡ Ibid. § Ibid. pp. 111, 112. || Ibid.

which does keep, and ever has kept the members of the great *Catholic* or *universal* church, spread as it is all over the universe, in one faith and one communion.

Let us now see how far this objection is conformable or opposite to historical documents. I shall refer to the primate himself in his learned works called *De Britannicarum Ecclesiarum Primordiis*, and his *Index Chronologicus*, when I can do so; because it may save me some little trouble, and because nothing is more satisfactory than an adversary's own confession. In a word, I mean to convict Archbishop Usher, *the Controvertist*, upon the evidence of Archbishop Usher, *the Antiquary*. The following facts then are admitted and distinctly stated by him, together with the authorities on which they rest, relative to the connection which subsisted in ancient times between the churches of these islands and the See of Rome.

In 397 St. Albeus, an Irishman by birth, was consecrated bishop by the Pope, and afterwards returned into Ireland. In 402 two other Irishmen, SS. Declan and Kieran, after studying at Rome, were consecrated bishops by the Pope, and sent to preach the gospel in their own country.* The same account is given of St. Ibarus, another celebrated Irish bishop. He was sent from Rome to Ireland in the year 420.† In 431 Palladius, a deacon of the Roman church, was consecrated by Pope Celestine bishop of the Scots, and sent by him to the Scots of Ireland; but, being discouraged by the opposition he there met with, he passed over to the British Scots in the Highlands, and is acknowledged as their apostle. In 432, St. Patrick, after residing long at Rome, and learning his religion there,‡ is sent to preach the gospel in Ireland by the above-mentioned Pope Celestine. In 434 Secundinus, Auxilius and Isernus are ordained bishops, and sent from Rome to the assistance of St. Patrick. In 462 St. Patrick goes to Rome, to give an account of his mission in Ireland, and to obtain from Pope Hilarius a confirmation of what he had settled there. About the latter end of the fifth century, it was the custom of the Irish to go in crowds to Rome upon pilgrimages of devotion.§ In 540 St. Finian of Clonard, the master of so many eminent Irish scholars, was consecrated bishop at Rome. In 580 SS. Columbanus and Gallus pass over to the continent, where they are received by the bishops and princes of France and Italy as illustrious and orthodox doctors of the Catholic faith. In 594 Pope Gregory the Great writes different letters, to the bishops of Ireland, in answers to questions which they had proposed to him concerning baptism, the Nestorian errors, and other matters. In these he writes in the style of a superior to his inferiors.|| In the year 609, St. Augustine's successor in the see of Canterbury, St. Laurence, exercises this authority by writing separately to the Irish and Welsh bishops, exhorting them to conform to the rest of the church in the observance of Easter.¶ In 628 the southern Irish are reclaimed

* Primord, p. 661, ed. 1639.

† Ibid. p. 800.

‡ "Patricius Romanis disciplinis eruditus." Girald. Camb. cited by Usher.

§ Girald. Camb. in Vita S. David, quoted by Usher.

|| Vide Epistolas S. Greg. l. ii. ep. 36, et. l. ix. ep. 61.

¶ Ibid. l. ii. c. 4.

from their erroneous practice by Pope Honorius. In 630 a deputation of learned and holy men were sent by the bishops of Ireland to "the fountain of their baptism, like children to their mother,"* to confer with the Apostolic See concerning the observance of Easter and other matters. Amongst these was St. Lasrean, who was consecrated bishop by Pope Honorius, and appointed his *legate in Ireland*.† In 640 Tomianus, Archbishop of Armagh, and other Irish prelates, still anxious about the right observance of Easter, write to consult Pope Severinus, and receive an answer to their letter from his successor Pope John. In 648 St. Foillan, an Irish ecclesiastic, goes to receive episcopal consecration from Pope Martin, with authority to preach the faith amongst infidels. In 686 St. Killian, an Irish bishop, goes to Rome on the same errand. About this time, and during a long time after, England continued to be supplied with bishops and learned doctors from Ireland, who differed in nothing from the Roman missionaries, except as to the time of keeping Easter, and the form of their clerical tonsures. In 680 St. Wilfrid, archbishop of York, assisted at the first great lateran council of 125 bishops under Pope Agatho, in which he bore testimony to the orthodoxy of the churches of Ireland, as well as of Britain. In the eighth and ninth centuries the Irish continued to flock to the continent more than ever,‡ where they were received, not only as brethren, but also as masters, by the most zealous partizans of the See of Rome, such as St. Boniface, Archbishop of Mentz, and Pepin, King of France. One of these, St. Virgil, bishop of Salsburg, who died in 784, having, at different times, certain controversies with his metropolitan, the above-mentioned St. Boniface, the decision of them was, in every instance, referred to the Pope.§ At the beginning of the ninth century, Dumgal, an Irish doctor, wrote a book, which he dedicated to the Emperor Lotharius, in defence of the cross and pious images, against the innovater Claude, bishop of Turin;|| and at the end of this century, those three hardy scholars mentioned in a former letter came over from Ireland, to the pious and learned King Alfred in a boat made of *two bullocks hides and a half*. Their business, after staying some time with Alfred, was to perform a journey of devotion to Rome.¶ At this time, it was the practice for metropolitans to take an oath of canonical obedience to the Pope, as it was the practice of other bishops to take such an oath to them.** Hence, as the Archbishop of Canterbury, ever since the commission of St. Gregory the Great to St. Augustine, had legatine jurisdiction in Ireland, so we find the Irish prelates taking such an oath to the English primates in the 11th century.†† I now meet with another

* See Usher, also Epist. Cummiæni in Sylog. and an abstract of it in Ware's Writers of Ireland. Art. *Cummiænus*.

† This is expressly stated by Usher, Primord. p. 938.

‡ This appears by the testimony of Erric of Auxerre, quoted above in my second letter. § Ware's Descript. &c. || Ibid.

¶ Chron. Sax. Ethelward.

** Vide De Marda Concordan. Sacerd. et Imper. Thomassin, de Discip. Van Espon. Jus. Canon, &c.

†† See one of these made by Patrick, the other by Donatus, successively Archbishops of Dublin to Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, Anglia Sacra, vol. i. p.

anecdote to my purpose in Usher's own lucubrations. In 1096 the people of Waterford being desirous of having a bishop for that flourishing city, applied for this purpose to St. Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, being the *Legatus Natus*, as canonists express it, of all the British islands.* The same primate understanding that Samuel, archbishop of Dublin, caused the cross to be borne before him, in the same manner as if he had been possessed of legatine jurisdiction, reprehended him in the terms which are to be seen below.†

Here, Sir, is a chain of facts, the greater part of them being recorded by Usher himself, which carry up the acknowledgment of the Pope's spiritual supremacy in Ireland from the middle of the 12th century, (the pretended æra of its commencement) clearly up to the first prelates of Ireland at the end of the fourth century. I could strengthen this chain by adding many collateral links to it, if it were not already sufficiently strong.

I come now to consider the system which is peculiar to Dr. Ledwich on the present subject. In fact it is such as never did enter, and is never likely to enter into the conception of any other man of letters whomsoever. Having vainly attempted to give an Asiatic origin to the christianity of Ireland, totally unconnected with, and in direct opposition to the christianity which prevailed at Rome, in England, and other places; he endeavours to shew a continuation of this newly discovered religion down to the 12th century,‡ amongst an order of pious monks, called Culdees. He tells us, that their founder, St. Columba,§ was a quartodeciman;|| that "they did not adopt the corruptions of the Anglo-Saxon church, or the superstitions which contaminated christianity;"¶ that "they adhered to the ancient faith, and abhorred Roman innovations;"** that "Cumman, a Culdee, apostatized and listened to Roman emissaries;"†† that "at length Adamnan, the Culdean abbot of Hy, likewise apostatized."‡‡ These are the few, among the many glaring errors, which this "cultivator and destroyer of antiquity," as I have elsewhere called him, has fallen into in speaking of the Culdees.

In the first place, these *Colidei* or *worshippers of God*, were not a distinct order of monks founded by St. Columba, and confined to the island of Hy; but this was a general name for all the ancient Scotch and Irish monks, or rather canons regular, as we are assured by unquestionable authority.§§ 2dly, St. Columba and his monks

80. The following is an extract from the former: "Ego Patricius ad regendam Dublinam, Metropolem Hiberniæ, electus, tibi Rev. Pater Lanfrance *Britanniarum Primas*, et S. Dorobernensis Ecclesiæ Archiepiscopo, professionis meæ charitatem porrigo; neque tibi, tuisque successoribus in omnibus quæ ad Christianam religionem pertinent obtemperatum esse promitto."

* Index Chron. add dictum Ann. et Primord. See also Eadmer. Hist. Novorum, c. 36.

† "Præterea audivi quia facis portari crucem ante te in via. Quod si verum est, mando tibi ne amplius hoc facias: quia non pertinet nisi ad Archiepiscopum a Romano Pontifice pallio confirmatum." Epist. Anselm. l. iii. ep. 72. l. iv. ep. 27.

‡ Antiq. p. 96.

§ Ibid. p. 103.

|| Ibid. p. 107.

¶ P. Ibid.

** P. 100.

†† P. 108.

‡‡ P. 111.

§§ Giraldus calls them "Cælibes, quos Cælicolas vel Colideos vocant." Topograph. Hib. Dist. ii. c. 4. Hector Boetius, lib. vi. Hist. Scot. says, that the name became so common, that priests in general, almost down to his own time, were called "Culdei," that is to say, "Cultores Dei."

of Hy, were not quartodecimans, if Bede, who knew them so well, may be credited in what he affirms concerning them. 3dly, The Culdees had no other faith, or ecclesiastical discipline, except as to the mode of computing the festivals of Easter, than the English church, and all the other churches of the same ages had. For does Dr. Ledwich himself believe, that, if they had denied the real presence of Christ in the blessed Eucharist, or the utility of praying for the dead, or of desiring the prayers of the saints, or the Pope's supremacy, or had even rejected the use of pious pictures in their churches, or of holy water, and such like things, which we are sure the English Saxons adopted, they would have been invited to join with the Roman missionaries in forming our infant church, in educating its youth, and in governing it in quality of bishops? Would their virtues have been so highly extolled by Bede, and the Catholic hagiographers in general, as they are, and would the names of their saints be inscribed upon the churches, and in the martyrologies of Rome, and of all the Catholics of christendom? 4thly, It is evident, that what Dr. Ledwich writes concerning the *ancient religion* and *Roman innovations*, ought to be inverted: for nothing is more certain, than that the ancient British prelates originally followed the practice of Rome and the other churches with respect to the time of keeping Easter, as well as in other particulars; and that the error which they and the Irish prelates fell into upon this point was an innovation, comparatively of a late date. Of this we have positive proofs: for the chief bishops of the British church were present at, and subscribed to the council of Arles, as I observed to you before; the very first canon of which appoints the time of Easter to be kept on the same day throughout the world, and that the Pope should give general notice of that day.

This canon was confirmed in the œcumenical council of Nice, and the emperor Constantine wrote a circular letter to all the churches of the christian world, informing them of what had been decreed in that particular, and exhorting the several bishops to subscribe to it.* In this letter he testifies, that our British provinces were amongst those which agreed, as to the time of celebrating Easter, with Rome and the remainder of the west, as also with the south, the north, and a great part of the east; in opposition to a certain part of the east, namely, Syria and Mesopotamia. It is evident, then, that the observance of the British churches was conformable to that of Rome in this particular, at least down to the year 325, when the aforesaid letter was written; and there cannot be a doubt that they continued in the same observance, as long as the Pope, agreeably to the ancient custom, and the decree of the council of Arles,† had had a facility of writing to them, and giving them notice of the right day of keeping Easter; that is to say, until the Britons were crushed by the Saxons, and driven into the mountains of Wales and Cornwall. This catastrophe was complete about the year 500; at which time we may suppose that, attempting to calculate the vernal equinox, and the time of the moon, for themselves, instead of receiving the

* Euseb. on Vit. Constant. l. iii. c. 17.

† Can. i.

calculations of Rome and Alexandria,* they fell, not indeed into the practice of the Jews and quartodecimans, which consisted in keeping the Pasch on the 14th day of the moon next after the vernal equinox, whatever day of the week that happened to be, but into a peculiar error of their own, by keeping Easter on the 14th day when it fell upon a Sunday; whereas the churches on the continent, in this case, waited till the ensuing Sunday. This erroneous calculation the British prelates seem to have communicated to those of Ireland and Scotland. The error in question, though attended with great inconveniences,† yet not being formally condemned by the church, like that of the quartodecimans, was tolerated by the Roman See and the prelates in communion with it, until the christians of these islands becoming sensible of it, gradually relinquished it. Now this rectifying of an acknowledged error, Dr. Ledwich repeatedly terms *apostacy*. But to what system did the British churches apostatize? To that which was common to all christians except themselves; to that which their fathers had followed, and subscribed to in a great council; in short to that which Dr. Ledwich himself, with all those of his communion, adopt at the present day! See, Sir, into what disorders and contradictions this bewildered antiquary has plunged, in order to prove that Catholicity was not the ancient religion of Ireland!"

The reader will hardly think it necessary to ask my opinion on the subject of the foregoing controversy, as he must perceive that if I believed with Dr. Ledwich and Archbishop Usher, that Protestantism was the first system of christian worship established in Ireland, I should not have brought forward such incontrovertible arguments on the part of the Catholics as Dr. Milner has advanced. I have not done so, however, through a spirit of partiality or prepossession, but because I found it my duty to state the arguments of the ablest writers on both sides of the question, and thus place the reader on the most elevated ground, whence he could view with more clearness, and judge with more certainty of the subject in debate. If, however, any person should tell me that, in agitating this question, I was influenced only by a wish to exalt the Catholic at the expense of the Protestant church, and if he should thence conclude that I am not that impartial writer which I profess to be in the title of my work, I can only reply, that if the Catholic religion was the first religion established in Ireland, I would be a very prejudiced and bigotted writer to leave my readers under an impression that it was not, and he who would require of me to do so, and to pass the question by unnoticed, would openly avow himself to be what I disclaim, a religious bigot. I shall be always happy to do justice, not only to Protestants, but to all mankind, whenever I can do it with can-

* St. Leo testifies that the calculation was made at Alexandria, (which city was famous for astronomical studies) and being notified to the Pope, was by him promulgated throughout christendom.

† Venerable Bede furnishes us with a striking instance of this inconvenience with respect to king Oswy, who followed the British computation, and his queen Eanfled, who adopted that of the continent. It happened on one occasion, that the king was celebrating his Easter with halleluiahs and flesh meat, while the queen was beginning her holy week with lamentations and fasting. L. iii. c. 25.

dour, but the spirit of conciliation shall never carry me so far, as to forget what I owe to truth and honesty. For my part I must confess, that if I were a Protestant, I would begin to suspect my religion if it stood in need of so weak a proof as that by which Usher and Ledwich endeavour to support it, namely, that it was the ancient religion of Ireland; and that the Catholic religion was only an innovation, an intrusion upon it; for if the established religion be the true religion, or, (grant with most Protestant writers that no religion is free from error,) if it be the most acceptable to God, surely it must be equally true, equally acceptable, though the first creed established in Ireland was downright heresy; but if it be not the true or the acceptable religion, can it be rendered so by proving it the same with that which was first preached in Ireland. Can a Protestant then take a more effectual way of bringing his religion into suspicion than by weakly endeavouring to prove it to be what it never was—the same with that taught by St. Patrick and his successors, and which, though it even were, would be rendered neither more nor less perfect by it than if it were not—for in either case it should ultimately rest on its own merits. It is to be lamented that Protestant writers who argue with so much logical accuracy on every other subject, and who display a grasp of mind equal to any thing that comes properly within the sphere of human investigation, should betray such poverty of talent, and so contracted a view of their subject, when they come to treat of religion. Doctor Warner, who evinces more impartiality than any other English writer who has treated of Irish history, forgets his wonted good sense and candour when he touches on religion: Endeavouring to prove with Usher that the Catholic was not the first christian religion of Ireland, he leads us through an inextricable labyrinth, from which even the wings of Daedalus could not extricate us. Believing, however, that the question has been sufficiently discussed already, I shall not enter the lists with Dr. Warner on the subject, but merely quote two passages from the seventh book of his History of Ireland, in which he affirms and denies the self-same propositions. After giving such a view of primitive christianity in Ireland as he thought would prove it not to be the Catholic religion, he thus concludes, “It was necessary to give the reader this abstract of the religion of the ancient Irish; which, under that title, he may find treated of in a book by archbishop Usher, if he desires to see it more at large, and in which the authorities that he goes upon are particularly cited. This sketch, however, is sufficient to convince us that the reformation made no other change in the church of Ireland than to bring it back again to its ancient state before the court of Rome had usurped an authority over it, and corrupted it with innovations as contrary to scripture as to common sense. In short, it will remove one of the main pillars on which they rest their arguments against Protestants, that we had no other church before Luther but the church of Rome. For from hence it hath appeared that *during the first seven hundred years after the introduction of christianity*, the Irish were so far from owning the authority of the church of Rome, that they had their own liturgy distinct from the Roman service—their own ecclesiastical rites and

customs, their own metropolitical power without a pall even greater than it was after it.”*

Compare this with what he says a few pages after, where, talking of the Congress of Dromceat, and the influence exercised over it by St. Columba, he says: “Before we take a final leave of this extraordinary monk, in order to shew the reader *the state of religious knowledge at that time in Ireland*, it may be proper to let him know that every family of the nobility and gentry throughout the kingdom which had renounced paganism, *had a singular veneration for some particular saint whose protection they implored, and whose name they invoked upon all occasions as the heathens did their household gods*. In short, there was not a country or territory in the whole island which had not their particular saint, whom they chose as the guardian of their lives and fortunes, and these saints are all recorded with the provinces and families they had the charge of. But these were all allowed to be of an inferior order when compared with Patrick, who possessed the first place in the Irish calendar, which he still retains, as the guardian angel of the whole island. Colum Kill was esteemed the tutelary saint of the illustrious tribe of O’Neill, and to his interest alone the success of their battles, in which they were invincible, was attributed.”

In the first of these quotations we are told, that “the reformation made no other change in the church of Ireland than to bring it back again to its ancient state,” and also that this ancient state continued “during the first seven hundred years after the introduction of christianity;” but in the last quotation we are told, that in less than a century and a half after the introduction of christianity, namely, when the Congress of Dromceat was held, the Irish *venerated the saints, and implored their protection as the heathens did their household gods*. This surely was not the doctrine of the reformation, and the writer must have greatly forgot himself who made the assertion: but to demonstrate beyond all possibility of contradiction that this otherwise impartial writer grossly contradicts himself, when he speaks of religion, it will be sufficient to shew, that he affirms and denies the self same proposition. Here we see him acknowledging that the Irish venerated saints, and implored their assistance, but, when at the conclusion of the very same book in which he makes this assertion, he returned once more to the subject of proving that the reformation made no change in the ancient religion of Ireland, he unhesitatingly asserts, that “the doctrine of transubstantiation, and the worship of saints, were not so much as thought of at that time.”

From what has been said in this chapter, I presume every unbiassed reader will be able to form a pretty accurate idea of the religion first established in Ireland by St. Patrick and his successors. It now remains to shew the progress which this religion made from the time of this apostle to the invasion of the Danes, and to give some account of those Irishmen to whom the propagation of the faith, not only in Ireland, but in other countries, is particularly in-

* Warren’s Ireland, p. 297.

debted ; after which we shall again resume our civil history with the invasion of the Danes.

Of St. Patrick himself we have already spoken : we shall therefore begin with those who co-operated with him in the propagation of christianity, and in the establishment of schools and religious foundations.

St. Albe, Declan, and Kieran, are said to have preached the gospel in Ireland before the arrival of St. Patrick, and to have been contemporary with him. The former founded the church of Emly in the county of Tipperary in the beginning of the fifth century. It was a school of great repute, and produced St. Colman and St. Molua, the latter of whom was son to Eocha, king of Munster. He founded the church of Killaloe, or, perhaps, more correctly, Kill-Molua. About the same time St. Declan founded churches and schools in the Deasies, in the county of Waterford, from which he got the name of Patrick of the Deasies, a name said to have been given to him by St. Patrick himself, who also gave St. Molua the name of Patrick of Munster."

CHAPTER LVI.

The Irish Bishoprics, and a biographical sketch of their respective Founders.

IN our preceding chapters, in narrating the events and incidents of the life of St. Patrick, we gave an account of the archbishopric of Armagh. St. Albe, who was consecrated Bishop of Munster, by the Pope, A. D. 501, is considered by our annalists, to have been the first prelate of the arch-diocese of Cashel. It is said, that before the coming of St. Patrick, he was converted to christianity by a Roman missionary. He erected a Cathedral and abbey at Emly, in the county of Tipperary,—and died Archbishop of Emly and Cashel, according to Sir James Ware, A. D. 527.

The cathedral of Emly,* was for ages, acknowledged the metropolitan church of Munster, until it was united to the archiepiscopal See of Cashel, in the year 1569.†

* EMLY, now a poor village, exhibiting only the shadows of its ancient architectural magnificence, is situated in the barony of Clanwilham, County of Tipperary, at the distance of fourteen miles West of Cashel. Here is still to be seen a "wilderness of ecclesiastical ruins," worthy of the pen of a Byron, or the pencil of a Rosa. In the sixth century a University was founded in Emly, which until the city was burned and plundered by the Danes, in the ninth century, afforded, it is said by Colgan, education to fifteen hundred students at a time. So late as the reign of Henry VIII. it was deemed a city of consequence, and shortly after the accession of that tyrant to the English throne, Thomas Hurly, then bishop of Emly, erected there a spacious college for secular Priests. A destructive fire which occurred in 1192, reduced the cathedral, abbeys, and public buildings of Emly to ruin and desolation. The country around Emly is rich, picturesque, and beautiful.

† In a future chapter we will give a full and comprehensive description of the once famous city of CASHEL, in the County of Tipperary,—of its regal, ecclesias-

The archiepiscopal diocese of Dublin, although a Bishop's See since the days of St. Patrick, was not constituted into an archiepiscopal See until Cardinal Paparo, in A. D. 1152, the Pope's legate, presented Gregory, its then bishop, with his Holiness's pall, investing that prelate with the dignity and power of archbishop of Dublin and Glendalough. The Bishopric of Glendalough,* which was founded by St. Kevin, in the middle of the sixth century, remained from its establishment a distinct and independent See until archbishop de Londres obtained from Pope Honorius III., A. D. 1213, a Bull for annexing and uniting it to the See of Dublin. On the return of archbishop de Londres from Rome, where the Pope conferred on him legatine powers, he received from King John, in 1215, a confirmation of the Pope's Bull. William Piro, who died in 1228, was the last Canonical bishop of Glendalough.

"Notwithstanding the Bull of the Pope, and the grant of King John," says Sir James Ware, "the O'Tooles, chiefs of Fir-Thuathal, continued, long after this period, to elect bishops and abbots to Glendalough, though they had neither revenues nor authorities, beyond the district of Thuathal, which was the western part of the county of Wicklow, in consequence of which the city was suffered to decay, and became nearly a desert, in 1497, when Denis White, the last titular bishop, surrendered his right, in the Cathedral church of St. Patrick, Dublin."

The saintly founder of Glendalough, *Cormgen*, (or Kevin) was the son of one of the princes of Wicklow, and became, in the maturity of his age, as renowned for his literary attainments as for his eminent piety. "He wrote," says Hanner, "one book on the origin of the British, and another on the reigns of Heber and Heremon." He died at Glendalough, where his remains were entombed on the third of June, A. D. 618, when he had attained the patriarchal age of one hundred and twenty years.

The fourth archiepiscopal See of which we would give a history, is TUAM, in the county of Galway.† St. Jarlath, the son of Loga,

tical, and feudal ruins, which are still standing, as decayed and dilapidated, though sublime and solemn monuments of its former greatness and grandeur.

* GLENDALOUGH (the vale of the two lakes) once a regal and episcopal city, the capital of *Hymayle*, the principality of the O'Tooles, is situated in the barony of Ballinacor, County of Wicklow, at the distance of twenty miles S. W. from Dublin. The venerable and affecting ruins of seven churches here rear their ivy-wreathed heads. Before the incarnation, this sequestered and gloomy spot, selected by St. Kevin, in 498, for his hermitage, was consecrated to Druidical worship, and the caves of their mysteries, and the remains of one of their temples still exist to give an antique aspect to the scene. Many of the Kings of Ireland were interred in Glendalough, though now (if we except the mouldering sepulchre of O'Tooles) there are no vestiges of their tombs remaining. Like the walls of Ilium, they are mingled with the dust, and no one can tell where they once stood in the solemn grandeur of sepulchral architecture. As we will, in the course of this history, have frequent occasions to speak of Glendalough, we will avail ourselves of one of them to give a detailed description of a place that makes so loud and impressive a sound in our annals, calling forth an echo of historic association from the mind of every antiquary.

† TUAM, a wealthy and populous town, is situated in the barony of Downamore, county of Galway, at the distance of ninety-three Irish miles from Dublin. This archiepiscopal city of mouldering monuments, presents us with sublime mementos

chieftain of Galway, was the first bishop of Tuam, of which See he became the founder in A. D. 601, when he erected in that town, a magnificent Cathedral, and an abbey. Sir James Ware, in his lives of the bishops, extols St. Jarlath for his sanctity, benevolence, and literary acquirements. "He was," writes that bigoted Protestant author, "a learned man, in whom piety and purity of manners vied with his extensive learning. He died, full of days, on the 26th of December, or as others will have it, the 11th of February, but in what year I cannot with all my inquiry find out. Certain prophecies, wrote in Irish, are extant in his name, relating to his successors in the See of Tuam. His bones, long after his death, were sought for and found, and put in a silver shrine and deposited in a church, from thence commonly called *Teampoll na aitan*, or the chapel of the shrine." St. Brendan, the first bishop of Clonsfert, county of Galway, studied classics and theology under St. Jarlath. The first Archbishop of Tuam was Edan O'Hoisson, who received the Pope's pall from Cardinal Paparo, in A. D. 1152. The bishoprics that were made subject by the pall of Pope Eugenius III, in 1152, to the archbishop of Tuam, were Mayo, Killala, Roscommon, Clonsfert, Achonry, in the county of Sligo, Clonmacnois, King's county, and Kilmacduagh, county of Galway.

The Bishopric of Meath was first established by St. Finian, in the year 520. To the See of Clonard, which was the original foundation of the bishopric of Meath, as all the successors of St. Finian down to the prelate of Simon Rochfort, in A. D. 1194, bore the title of bishops of Clonard, were subject to the little Sees of Duleek, Kells, Trim, Ardbracean, Dunshaghlín, and Slane, all which places are in the county of Meath. St. Finian was descended of a noble Milesian family. He studied under the bishop of St. David's in Wales, who ordained him a priest. On returning to his native land,

of its ancient princely and prelatical greatness and grandeur, with those towering castles, now mantled in ivy, from which the daring feudal chieftain rushed, in the full flush of chivalric pride, to the combat of the valiant,—with relics of those venerable cathedrals, where eloquent piety transformed the obdurate sinner into the repentant saint;—and with those cloistered abbeys, where sanctity administered profusely spiritual consolation to the desponding christian—and the rites of hospitality to the traveller, as well as food to the poor, and the comforts of generous charity to the hapless widow, and the destitute orphan. Who, with a spark of sensibility alive in his bosom, can view the tomb-strewn aisles of an Irish Cathedral, or the ivy-draped cloisters of an abbey, without having his mind impressed with awful veneration for the zeal and piety which so peculiarly distinguished our ancient ecclesiastics? Some of the modern houses of Tuam are commodious and elegant. The Protestant Cathedral, which stands on the site of that which St. Jarlath erected in A. D. 540, though not imposing in architectural appearance, is yet a building of solidity and magnitude. The new and magnificent Catholic Cathedral, lately erected there, is an honour to the taste and liberality of the Roman Catholics of Connaught. Harris and Ware say that Tuam was a great metropolitan city, in the sixth and seventh centuries, during which periods many Scotch and English princes made liberal offerings at the shrine of St. Jarlath.

The present Roman Catholic Bishop of Tuam—a prelate on whom the mantle of the illustrious DOYLE seems to have fallen, is the Most Rev. Dr. McHALE, a gentleman whose piety is a brilliant ornament gemming the Catholic religion, and whose intellectual genius and sterling patriotism have kindled new and splendid stars in the horizon of our native country's fame. We will have occasion in the course of this history, to say more of Tuam.

the fame of his piety and eloquence recommended him to the Pope, who appointed him bishop of Clonard. "Here he erected a Cathedral," and, says Ware, "a famous College, which by his great care and labours, bred many eminent, holy, and learned men; some of them were the two Kierans, the two Brendans, the two Columbesses, and Raudan. And as his school was in a manner a sacred seat of all kinds of wisdom, as the writer of his life observes, so he obtained for himself the name of '*Finian the wise*.' BREWER, the liberal and enlightened English Tourist, in the topographical sketch which he gives, in his valuable work, entitled the '*Beauties of Ireland*,' writes 'St. Finian also founded at this place an abbey, in which he established a school, which became one of the most celebrated academies of Ireland, at a time when this island was famed throughout neighbouring countries, for the success with which letters were cultivated in the sanctity of its cloisters. When we reflect on the piety and urbanity of the schoolmen of Ireland, in the sixth and seventh centuries, and recollect, on the testimony of BEDE, if foreign evidence be wanting, that they received with benevolent hospitality, aspirants after learning from other countries, including Britain, we must needs look back with veneration, and must also regard with a sigh of pity the present humility of this fallen town!'"*

St. Finian died, according to Ware, at Clonard, about the year 552. The diocese of Meath extends over parts of six counties, namely, the two Meaths, Longford, Cavan, Louth, and King's county. An accomplished Irish writer, in descending on the extensive erudition and mental powers of St. Finian, observes—"So great was the fame of Finian as a commentator on sacred Scripture, that all the holy men of Ireland, came to hear wisdom from his animated discourses. Hither came the twelve saints whom St. Patrick constituted apostles of the island, the venerable Kieran, of Saigar, in Ossory, who, with his hair whitened with the snows of a hundred winters, did not disdain to hear Finian expound to him the sublime volume of holiness,—here also came Kieran abbot of Clonmacnois, who wore himself out in deeds of penance and sanctity, and died in his thirty-third year. The two Columbs, Columbkille, and Columb of Firdaglas;—the two Brendans, Brendan of Birr, and Brendan of Kerry—Raudan, abbot of Lorrha, in the county of Tipperary, Molua of Clonfert, and others, as reported by USHER and Colgan resorted hither.

* CLONARD (which signifies in Irish the lonely retirement) is situated near the bank of the river Boyne, in the barony of Moyfenrath, county of Meath, at the distance of 25 Irish miles north of Dublin. This decayed town which was once so proud and populous, presents in its ruins a melancholy picture of the devastations of war and time. Mr. Brewer in describing the architectural relics of Clonard, says:—"The remains of the buildings erected after the refoundation of the abbey, by Walter de Lacy, in A. D. 1175, for canons regular, following the rule of St. Augustine, were, until a recent date, of some extent, and of considerable interest;—but we regret to state, that, with indifference almost amounting to barbarous apathy, they have been lately entirely destroyed, with the exception of an ancient and richly sculptured font, which is removed to the modern church of Clonard, a fabric completed in the year 1810." The town of Clonard is ornamented by a beautiful vicinage of domains spread along the picturesque banks of the river Boyne.

It would appear that these pious men, while residing at Clonard, did not allow their studies to interfere with their bodily exercises, but that they cultivated the rich and fertile ground around their abode, and thus by invigorating their bodies, enlivened their minds, and rendered them more capable of enduring the mental toil attendant on the accumulation of great learning."

The first Protestant bishop of Meath was Edward Staples, an Englishman, appointed by Pope Clement VII. in 1530; but who, to retain the See, renounced the Catholic religion, and acknowledged the supremacy of Henry VIII. in 1543, and then married a wife. Shortly after the accession of queen Mary, the archbishops of Armagh and Dublin deprived him of the bishopric, to which William Walsh, D. D. of Waterford, was appointed by the Pope, A. D. 1554. As soon as Elizabeth was seated on the British throne, she caused bishop Walsh to be ejected from the See, and banished to Spain, where he died in the Cistercian College of Alcala, on the 3d of January, 1577.

The See of Clonmacnois,* (the resting place of the sons of the chiefs) in the King's county, was founded by St. Kieran the younger of the family of the Ards, in the year 548. Dermot, then monarch of Ireland, made to him a grant of a large tract of land, adjoining the river Shannon, on which the Saint erected a Cathedral and an abbey; but scarcely were the buildings completed, when the hand of death smote the pious and discreet founder, A. D. 549. The religious houses of Clonmacnois rose to eminent repute under the successors of St. Kieran, or *Ciaran*. The monastic establishment of Clonmacnois possesses more revenues and lands than any other ecclesiastical institution in Ireland. In the year 1152, at the Synod held before Cardinal Paparo, Moriartach O'Melider, then bishop of Clanmacnois, consented for himself and his successors, to be subject to the spiritual authority of the archbishops of Tuam.

The first Protestant bishop of Clonmacnois, was Florence Gerawan, who, in 1542, conformed to the behest of Henry VIII., by acknowledging his supremacy.

After the decease of Peter Wall, the last prelate of Clonmacnois, the See was, in pursuance of an act of Parliament, united to that of Meath, to which diocese it now belongs.

The See of the city of Limerick was founded about the middle of the sixth century, by St. Munchin, who built there an abbey and a Cathedral, which edifices were plundered and burned by the Danes in the year 853. St. Munchin died, according to Jocelyn, in the year 652.

We are told by Jocelyn that he was "a very religious man, and well read in the holy Scriptures." Ware in his *Lives of the Bishops*, writes—"The memory of the death of this Munchin, is designed under the name of '*Manicheus* the wise Irishman,' in the

* The superb, venerable, and affecting ruins of the churches, abbeys, and tombs of Clonmacnois, raise their grey pinnacles, and time-tinged turrets, on the banks of the river Shannon, in the north-western part of the King's county. We will speak more largely of these awful and impressive relics of ecclesiastical architecture, in a future chapter.

books *de Mirabilibus Scripturæ*.” From the period of the death of bishop Munchin until the year 1110, when the Danes of Limerick conformed to the christian creed, we have no historical record of the names or lives of the original prelate’s successors. In A. D. 1110, Gilbert, a learned and religious abbot of Ireland, was raised by the Pope to the episcopal throne of Limerick. Soon after his elevation, he assembled a synod at a place designated by Sir James Ware, *Rathbreassail*, “wherein, says that writer, (among other things) the bounds and limits of the bishoprics of Ireland were described.” Bishop Gilbert must have been very eminent for learning and sanctity, for the Pope appointed him his legate in Ireland, and in that capacity he was invited by Ralph, archbishop of Canterbury, to assist at the consecration of Bernard, bishop of *Minevia*, a ceremony which took place at Westminster, A. D. 1115.

He was a most accomplished scholar in theology and the classics. It appears from Colgan, that he wrote several epistles to Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, and a book on the state of the Irish church, in his time, which, it is said, was found in the last century, in Cotton’s library. This famous prelate, of whom St. Bernard, in his life of Malachy, makes an honourable mention, died about the year 1140.

William Casey was the first Protestant bishop of Limerick ; he was raised to that dignity, in A. D. 1552, by the order of Edward VI. By the distribution of Sees, made by Cardinal Paparo, the ancient bishopric of Aghadoe, in the county of Kerry, was annexed to Limerick. In the year 1663, the See of Ardfert, county of Kerry, was also united to that of Limerick.

The founder of the See of Ardfert, was St. Ert, who flourished in the fifth century.* Under that prelate St. Brendan, of Clonfert, studied divinity and classics.

The See of WATERFORD was founded in A. D. 1096, by St. *Malchus*, whom the Pope appointed over the Danes, who at that time constituted the majority of the citizens. That prelate was consecrated by Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by Gundalph, of Rochester. History does not tell us of the time of the first bishop of Waterford’s death. Since the year 1363, the Sees of Waterford and Lismore have been united. The first bishop of Lismore was St. Carthag,—he was a native of Munster, and became, in process of time, abbot of Rathkenny, in Meath, from whence, as we have related in a preceding chapter, he was despotically expelled by King *Blathmac*. This prelate built the famous university and cathedral of Lismore, about the year 635. “He died,” writes Sir James Ware, “after many testimonies of his sanctity, on the 14th of May, 638, and was buried in his own church of Lismore, which signifies the great enclosure.”

* ARDFERT, (or the height of miracles) is situated in the barony of Clanmorris, in the county of Kerry, at the distance of 144 Irish miles from Dublin. St. Brendan, in the sixth century, erected a superb and sumptuous abbey here, which with the cathedral of St. Ert, was destroyed by an accidental fire, A. D. 1089. The ruins of abbeys and churches now existing in Ardfert, are majestic and noble in their decay. In the mouldering choir of the cathedral, is exquisitely sculptured an *alto relievo* of St. Brendan. March, 1836.

He was succeeded by his coadjutor, and he and his successors, to the ninth century, acquired for the university such lofty fame, as "induced," says *Barthol Moran*, "men, in quest of learning, to flock thither in great numbers from far and near." Miler Magrath was the first Protestant bishop of Waterford and Lismore, appointed by Queen Elizabeth in the year 1585.

We come now to treat of the united Sees of Cork and Ross. The bishopric of Cork owes its establishment to St. Finbar, who became its first prelate, in the seventh century. Soon after obtaining the mitre of that diocese, he caused a spacious and elegant cathedral to be erected in the city of Cork, which, after his death, was solemnly dedicated to his memory. The original cathedral of St. Finbar is represented, by our annalists, to have been a building of architectural magnificence, and that all its windows were composed of rich and beautiful *stained glass*.* In the ninth century, the Danes despoiled and destroyed the cathedral of Cork, and carried off the silver shrine of its saintly founder. The cathedral was rebuilt, in the beginning of the eleventh century, through the munificence of McCarthy-more (the great king of Desmond.†) It appears that the church had fallen into decay, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, when it was found necessary to have it rased to the ground and rebuilt in its present form, between the years of 1725 and 1735, when

* The art of staining glass was carried to the highest point of perfection by our ancient artists, as the scanty but elegant specimens still to be seen in the cathedrals of Limerick, Kilkenny, Raphoe, Armagh, and several other of our antique ecclesiastic edifices, amply testify. In the infancy of the art, in Ireland, in the fourth century, the process of painting glass was very simple; it consisted in the mere arrangement of glass, tinged with different colours, in a symmetrical order, like the dies delineated on a mosaic ceiling. Our churches were adorned with stained glass windows, exhibiting scriptural and martyrological history, and religious and clerical symbols, two centuries before the church of St. Mark in Venice was decorated with this species of embellishment. We are told by Bishop Burke in the history of the Irish abbeys, that St. Kenan's Cathedral, built at Duleek, in the county of Meath, A. D. 489, was enlightened by stained glass windows, representing the sufferings of Christ. In the fifth and sixth century the art made rapid strides to perfection; the painters became more spirited in design, and more skilful and exquisite in execution; but though they delineated figures enlightened with their shades, yet they could not fill up their contours with fine groupings, or graphic elegancies of detail. When they were called upon to adorn palaces or churches, they had glass of every colour of the rainbow, prepared, out of which they cut the pieces they wanted to fill up the window frame or sash. But after a short time they discovered a more improved method of incorporating the colours in the glass itself, by heating it in a strong fire to the desired degree. We believe that the art is partially lost, for the modern attempts have neither the boldness of design nor the vivid freshness of colouring which our old abbeys and churches yet exhibit. The atrocious Gothic myrmidons of Cromwell, after the massacre at Drogheda, proceeded to the once magnificent abbey of Melefont, in the county of Louth, and in the rage of the diabolical spirit of their fanaticism, broke and demolished the gorgeously stained glass windows, which even the ravaging Huns of Elizabeth had spared. On these windows, which were presented to the abbot by O'Rourke, prince of Breffeny, A. D. 1169, were beautifully painted, at full lengths, the twelve apostles, the four evangelists, and the prophets of the Old Testament. Harris has asserted that if these windows were in existence in his day, 1763, that they would be worth six thousand guineas.

† DESMOND, (signifying in Irish *Deas Mumhan*) or South Munster, was an ancient principality of the McCarthy's, which comprehended within its bounds, the principal districts of the counties of Cork and Kerry.

the expense attending the erection of that structure, was defrayed by an additional duty imposed on the coal and culm consumed in the city and vicinage. BREWER, in his description of the city of Cork, speaks thus of St. Finbar's cathedral :—" It is quite unworthy of the diocess to which it belongs, whether we consider its dimensions, or architectural character. It is a massy, but a tasteless and dull pile, composed of stone. There is no transept, and at the west end is a tower, surmounted by an octangular spire, of most inelegant proportions. The Doric order is affected in the body of the building, but the windows have wooden sash-frames, and no single feature of the exterior is calculated to gratify either the ordinary or the judicious examiner. The interior is distinguished from that of a parochial church, suited to a provincial town, merely by the throne and stalls, which are in a sedate and respectable mode of design." St. Finbar was a native of Connaught, and it is conjectured that he received his education at the school of Clonard. After presiding for seventeen years over the diocess with singular piety and edification, he resigned it, and retired to a cell in the abbey of Cloyne, to end his life in penance, where he died on the 7th of October, but in what year is not known. " His body," writes Sir James Ware, " was conveyed to Cork, and there honourably buried in his church ; and his bones, I know not how long after, were put in a silver shrine."

According to the authority of the most creditable of our annalists, the See of Ross* was founded in the course of the sixth century by St. Feachan, who was one of those refulgent luminaries that not only irradiated Ireland with learning and religion, but extended the halo of their glorious brightness over the mental darkness of Europe, in the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries.

St. Feachan built a cathedral, an abbey, and a college here, during his prelacy. The year of the death of " this honest and upright divine," as Hanmer designates him, has not been handed down to us in history. It is said that he was succeeded in the bishopric by St. Connall, and by St. Brendan in the university. The See of Ross was united to that of Cork, by order of Queen Elizabeth, in 1583. The first Protestant bishop of Cork and Cloyne (the latter See was then an adjunct of that bishopric) was Dominick Tirrey, an apostate Catholic Priest, whom Henry VIII. appointed to that episcopal station in consequence of his servility.

There is a *modernized* cathedral in Ross, but it possesses no architectutive character worthy of description. " On the west," says BREWER, " is a tower, surmounted by a spire of hewn stone, 50 feet in height. This ornamental spire was recently added (in 1827) by

* ROSS CABBERY (anciently designated *Ross Alithri*, or the green of pilgrimage) is situated on a rocky summit, which rises over the northern extremity of a handsome bay, in the county of Cork, is distant from Dublin 152 Irish miles. There is a fine and majestic pile of abbey ruins here. Several caves, in addition to those mentioned by Dr. Smith, of great extent, and divided into chambers, were discovered, near the abbey of St. Feachan, in 1791. The houses of Ross are neither pretty nor commodious ; but the country of groves and gardens in which it is embosomed, and the spacious bay that rolls its blustering billows before it, impart to it much external beauty of sylvan scenery.

Mr. Michael Shanahan, architect of Cork, under the direction of the Dean and chapter."

The founder of the See of Cloyne was St. Colman, the son of a chieftain named *Lenin*, who was a disciple of St. Finbar, the first bishop of Cork. He built at Cloyne a cathedral and an abbey. He died on the 4th of November, A. D. 604. St. Brendan, abbot of Clonfert, wrote his biography, in which he said of Colman: "he was for learning, and a good life, chief among the Irish saints of his time.

On the death of bishop Paye, in 1430, in pursuance of a bull of Pope Martin V., which was ratified by the Irish Parliament, the Sees of Cork and Cloyne were united.* This union was dissolved on the accession of George Synge to the See, in 1638; since which period Cloyne has continued a distinct and independent bishopric. The Protestant cathedral, which stands on the site of the structure of St. Colman, is a neat Gothic edifice, which was rebuilt and re-edified under the direction of bishop Agar, in 1776. The choir is elaborately decorated with Gothic and Italian ornaments.

To St. Kieran the elder, is to be attributed the institution in A. D. 540 of the bishopric of Ossory, at Saiger, in the King's county, where the saint built a cathedral. We have already given a biographical sketch of St. Kieran. This See was translated to a place called Aghaboe, in the Queen's county, where St. Canice or Kenny erected a monastery in the latter end of the sixth century. St. Canice, who acquired such eminence for sanctity and learning, was the son of *Laidee*, a poet famed for his genius and mental powers. This saint died at Aghaboe, in the year 599. It is conjectured that the removal of the chair of the bishops of Ossory from Saiger to Aghaboe, happened in the year A. D. 1052. Of the successors of St. Canice in the See of Ossory, there is only an account extant of four prelates of the name of Carthaeus, of one Sedna, of two Cormacs, the elder of whom died in A. D. 867, and the younger in 997. In 1178, Donald O'Fogarty died bishop of Ossory, after exercising the episcopal functions for twenty years. To him succeeded Felix O'Dullany. By the permission of the court of Rome, bishop O'Dullany, shortly after his accession, removed his episcopal throne from Aghaboe to Kilkenny, where he laid the foundation of the cathedral, which he dedicated to St. Kenny, whose remains he caused to be enshrined in it.† This prelate died in 1202, and his body was in-

* The pleasant and rural town of Cloyne, is situated on a summit, that rises above a vale, in the barony of Imo-Killy, county of Cork, at the distance of twelve miles from the city, one from the sea, and ten from the town of Youghal. In the cemetery which surrounds the ruins of St. Colman's abbey, are several sepulchral erections, which are marked with a very antique character. Contiguous to the church is a magnificent round tower, which rises to the elevation of ninety-two feet. In a disquisition on ancient Irish architecture, which we will write as soon as we shall have brought down our history to the eleventh century, we will amply treat of the round towers, as well as of the other ancient monuments with which Ireland abounds.

† We extract the following spirited description of the cathedral of Kilkenny, from MR. BREWER'S work:—"The cathedral of St. Canice is an extensive and commanding pile, seated on a gentle eminence, whence are obtained fine views over the city, and along the winding banks of the river Nore. This church is of a

tered in a grand tomb in St. Mary's monastery, at Jeripont abbey, county of Kilkenny.

This diocess, according to the statistical survey of the late Dr. Beaufort, is 36 miles in length, and 23 in breadth. It is a remarkable fact in the history of the bishopric of Ossory, that two of its prelates were Lord Justices of Ireland,—four Lord Chancellors; three Lord Treasurers; three translated to archbishoprics; one an Ambassador; and one a Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The first Protestant bishop of the See of Ossory, was John Bale, a degraded English Carmelite, to whom, in the year 1552, as a reward for his abjuration of his religion, the ministry of Edward VI. presented the mitre of Ossory; but he was not in the enjoyment of his episcopal dignity more than six months, when Queen Mary ascended the throne of her ancestors, and ordered his expulsion from the See.

The bishopric of Derry was founded by St. Eugene, after he had been consecrated by St. Patrick, in A. D. 545. This saint erected the primitive cathedral of the diocess of Derry, at *Ard-srath*, in the county of Antrim.*

"St. Eugene," says Sir James Ware, "was a great and industrious preacher, and born of the blood royal of Leinster." This emi-

cruciform shape, surmounted with a low tower. The length from east to west is 226 feet, in the clear; and the breadth of the cross, from north to south, 123 feet; "dimensions," writes Mr. Harris, "which are believed to exceed those of any other church in Ireland, except St. Patrick's and Christ church, Dublin." In the north transept is a chapel dedicated to St. Mary, long used as the parish church. In the same transept may also be noticed the remains of a fixed stone seat, locally called the chair of St. Kieran.

The eastern part of the church, comprising the choir and chancel, is seventy-seven feet in length. The bishop's throne, the seats, and the gallery are of varnished oak; the whole being conspicuous for a sedate simplicity. At the east end is a very lofty window, divided into three lights of the lancet form on the exterior, but each compartment finishing, internally, with a trefoil head. We are informed by Ware, that bishop Ledred, soon after the year 1318, expended large sums in embellishing his cathedral, and particularly in filling the windows with stained glass. His liberality was eminently displayed in this eastern window, the paintings of which represented the history of Christ, from the birth to the ascension. Rinuncini, legate to the Catholics of Ireland during the troubles of the seventeenth century, is said to have offered £700 for the glass of this window, which offer was declined; but, unhappily, the glass was destroyed, in 1650, by the fanatics of that gloomy period. Some mutilated fragments were afterwards collected by bishop Pococke, and placed in two ovals over the western door.

The nave is divided from its side aisles by pointed arches, unornamented, and supported by pillars composed of black marble. The side aisles are lighted by pointed windows, and the body of the church by windows of quatrefoil shape, placed in a clerestory. In the side aisles, and between the pillars, are numerous altar-monuments. The long succession of these sepulchral memorials adds greatly to the impressive effect of this division of the structure; and we have rarely seen the interior of an ecclesiastical building, which at the same time was so little indebted to architectural effort, and possessed so imperative a sway over the feelings."

* *Ard-srath*, (or according to its proper Irish orthography, *Ard-traig*, literally the height of the strand) is situated on the river Derg, in the county of Antrim. The abbey erected by St. Eugene, is now an ivy-covered heap of ruins. The cathedral built there by that saint, was dedicated to his friend and instructor St. Lu-roch. At that place there is a high mound or rath, which forms a pleasing feature in the landscape.

nent and exemplary ecclesiastic died at *Ard-srath*, the 23d of August, A. D. 618. His remains were entombed under the altar of his own cathedral. His successor, whose name has not been handed down to us, in the episcopal office, commenced his administration by translating the chair of the See to Maghera,* where it remained until A. D. 927, when it was removed to Derry, by Coen Comrach, where he repaired and re-edified the church built by St. Columba, in the year 543, and converted that edifice into a cathedral, and dedicated it to its founder.† The bishops of Derry assumed the title of bishops of *Rathlure*, another name for Ardsrath, in honour of its patron Saint, Luroch; hence all the bishops that governed the See, from Eugene to the time (1152) of Flathbert O'Brolcan, were styled *Rathlurienses*, until the year 1158, when the Synod, held at Briththaig, consisting of the Pope's Legate, the bishop of Lismore and twenty-five other prelates, enacted and decreed that all the future bishops of the diocese should be known and distinguished by the appellation of Derry.

Bishop Brolcan made extensive improvements in the Cathedral of Derry, in 1163, which work he was assisted to complete by munificent pecuniary contributions from Maurice McLoughlin, King of Ireland.

In 1152, Cardinal Paparo, the legate of Pope Eugene III. conferred on Maurice O'Coffy, then bishop of Derry, the title of prelate of Keanla *Eogain*, or Tyrone. This bishop died in February, 1174, and his body was buried in the cathedral of St. Columb Kill. Sir James Ware, to whose authority, on this subject, every historian of Ireland will have to refer, does not state that the See of Derry was occupied by any Protestant prelate before the accession to it, in 1605, of George Montgomery, a Scotchman, who was appointed by that ungrateful and fanatical regal pedant, James I.

The bishopric of Kilmore owes its primitive establishment, in the sixth century, to St. *Feidlimid*, who erected a church at a small village called Triburna, in the county of Cavan, from which place the future bishops took their title, until the year 1454, when Pope Nicholas V. issued a bull, empowering Andrew McBrady, then bishop of Triburna, to remove the episcopal chair to Kilmore, and to make that town his prelatical name. Bishop McBrady erected a cathedral at Kilmore, which he dedicated to the patron saint of the parish (Feidlimid) and placed in it twelve canons.‡ “This erection,” says Sir James Ware, “was confirmed in the following year by Pope

* MAGHERA is a small hamlet town in the barony of Loughlinsholen, county of Derry.

† The Cathedral, which stands on an eminence, by recent repairs, has been invested with architectural features, which make it appear a respectable religious edifice. A recent writer in describing the cathedral of Derry, says—“its angles are furnished with octagon cupolas, which display considerable taste; its spire is handsome, and on the eastern end there is a cross, after the manner of the old Roman Catholic churches. The inside is neat, if not elegant. It has ten fine-toned bells, and an excellent organ.

‡ KILMORE, (the great church) is a small village in the barony of Loughtee, county of Cavan. This place owes its name and origin to the circumstance of St. Columb Kill, having erected an abbey in it in the sixth century.

Calistus III. ; and about the same time, if I mistake not, the deanery of Kilmore was constituted. As for St. Feidlimid, he lived in the sixth century, and was brother to St. Diarmistius, abbot of *Innis-Cloghran*.* St. Feidlimid died on the ninth of August, but in what year I know not." The See was anciently designated Breffeny, from that being the ancient name of the districts now known by the appellations of Cavan and Leitrim, and then possessed, until the year 1641, by the septs of the O'Reilly, O'Rourke, O'Brady, O'Curry, O'Sheridan, McKiernan and McGaurall. Bishop McBrady died in the year 1456.

"There is," says Sir James Ware, "no mention of the diocese of Kilmore, in the decision of Sees, made at the Synod held under Cardinal John Paparo, in March, A. D. 1152." The first Protestant bishop of Kilmore, appointed by Elizabeth in 1585, was John Garvy, a Priest who had been suspended, for immoral conduct, by his predecessor, Edmund Nugent.

The See of Ardagh, in the county of Longford, is certainly the most ancient in Ireland, for it was founded by St. Patrick, in A. D. 488, who nominated and appointed his nephew, St. Mela, or Moel, its first bishop. This Saint died the 6th of February, in the first year of his episcopal administration. His successor was his brother, St. Melchuo, who died shortly after his elevation to the bishopric.

From the death of St. Melchuo until the accession of St. Erard, in the middle of the eighth century, we have no record of the bishops who ruled the See of Ardagh during the intervening period. "This Saint," writes Ware, "together with his brothers, Saints Albert and Hildulph, and other nineteen associates, left their own country about the middle of the eighth century, and went into Germany, where they laboured much in the propagation of christianity. St. Erard died at Ratisbon, on the 8th of January, and was buried in a nunnery ; but the certain year of his death I do not find. He was canonized by Pope Leo IX. in A. D. 1052." The first Protestant bishop of the See of Ardagh, was Lisack O'Farrell, who was appointed, in the room of his predecessor, Patrick McMahon, by Queen Elizabeth, in A. D. 1577.

The See of Ardagh† was united to that of Kilmore, in the year 1658, and this union was not dissolved until bishop Ulysses Burgh, was, in 1692, invested with its distinct and separate episcopal prerogatives, by King William III. On the death of that bishop in the same year, it was again made subject to the diocese of Kilmore, and continued so until the year 1741, when it was united under the pre-

* *INNIS-CLOGHRAN* (the stony island) is situated on the river Shannon, near Lough-Ree, and between the counties of West Meath and Roscommon.

† *ARDAGH* (the elevated hill) is situated in the barony of the same name, in the middle of the county of Longford, about six Irish miles S. W. of Edgworthstown. Of its ancient cathedral and other ecclesiastical erections, only scanty mural fragments now remain. "The chief interest of this place," says Brewer, "proceeds from its former importance in ecclesiastical history. Here are no traces of architectural splendour to arrest the attention." The modern parochial church for Protestant worship, is a building of extent and elegance. The country around Ardagh, through a contiguous part of which the Shannon runs, is fertile and picturesque.

lacy of Dr. Hart, to the archiepiscopal See of Tuam, with which it has ever since been held in *commendam*. Under the control of this diocese are thirty-seven parishes, situated in the counties of Longford, Leitrim, Cavan, Sligo, Roscommon, and West Meath.

The See of Elphin, in the county of Roscommon, was established by St. Patrick in A. D. 500, who consecrated St. Asic its first bishop. The cathedral built under the direction of St. Patrick, was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. "St. Asic," writes Sir James Ware, "was a most excellent goldsmith, and by his art beautified the cathedral with six pieces of curious workmanship. This prelate built a college at Elphin, which he filled with monks. He died at *Rathcung*, in Tirconnell, where he was buried." Before the English invasion, the See of Elphin held episcopal dominion over seventy-nine parishes in the counties of Roscommon, Sligo, Galway, and Mayo.

The first Protestant prelate of Elphin,* was Roland de Burgo, who renounced the religion of his fathers, and violated his solemn vows as a Catholic Priest, to gain this bishopric from the ministers of Edward VI. He was appointed in A. D. 1552.

The See of Clonfert, in the county of Galway, was founded in the middle of the sixth century, by St. Brendan, son of *Finlog*, who was a contemporary, and of the same christian name with his fellow-student, St. Brendan of Birr, in the King's county. St. Brendan was a native of the county of Kerry, the author of works entitled the "*Christian Confession, Charter of Heaven, and Rules for Monks.*" St. Brendan died on the first of March, A. D. 571. The first Protestant bishop of Clonfert was Richard Nangle, who acknowledged the supremacy of Henry VIII., in consequence of which Pope Clement VII., in the year 1534, caused the archbishop of Ireland to deprive him of all episcopal authority. To this diocese that of *Kilmacduack*, in the county of Galway, has been subject since the year 1602.†

The bishopric of Kilmacduach, county of Galway, was first established by St. Colman son of Duach, in the sixth century, "descended," says Sir James Ware, "of the noble family of the *Hysiocris* in Connaught, which from him is called Kilmacduach." In what year he died cannot be ascertained. We have no account of his successors, until the year 814, when a divine of the name of Indrect governed the See.

The first Protestant bishop of this See was Stephen Kirwin, an apostate from Catholicity, whom Elizabeth elevated to the prelatical dignity, in consequence of his recession from the ancient faith

* ELPHIN is a small market and post town, in the county of Roscommon, about 100 miles from Dublin, in a N. W. direction. In the year 1177, the English burned down Elphin. The cathedral, or rather parish church of that place, is a respectable edifice.

† CLONFERT (the secret den of wonders) is a small village, situated in the barony of Longford, county of Galway, at the distance of about sixty-five Irish miles from Dublin. In ancient times the cathedral of this place was famed for its seven marble altars. The remains of the cathedral, still to be seen here, are but the fragments of the west front portico, which was erected to ornament the edifice, in 1270, by John, bishop of Clonfert, (an Italian) who was then the Pope's Nuncio in Ireland, are yet brilliant specimens of architecture and sculpture.

of Ireland. Under his episcopal sway the Sees of Clonfert and Kilmacduach were united.*

The small See of Fenabou or Kilfenora, in the county of Clare, was instituted by St. Fechin in the sixth century. Of that Saint we have already spoken. This See was united to that of Killaloe, in the year 1752. The bishopric contains only eighteen parishes, and is esteemed the poorest prelacy in Ireland. The first Protestant bishop of Fenabou was John O'Hanlon, who was promoted for his apostacy to the episcopal authority of this diocese, by the ministers of Edward VI. In the year 1622, Richard Betts, an Englishman, on being appointed bishop of Fenabou, by Charles I., declined consecration, on account of the scanty revenue which the See then yielded.†

The See of Killaloe, in the county of Clare, was founded in A. D. 639, by St. Flannan, the son of King Theodorick, and the disciple of St. Molua. This St. Flannan made a journey to Rome, where his eloquence, learning, and piety attracted the notice of Pope John IV., who in consequence, consecrated him bishop of Killaloe.

There is no account, until the arrival of the English, extant of the successors of St. Flannan, if we except five, namely, *Carmacan O'Mulcashol*, who died A. D. 1019; *O'Gernidider*, died 1055; *Thady*, died 1083; *Teig*, (whom Ware designates 'a learned and liberal man') died in 1161; and *Donough O'Brien*, son of the Prince of Thomond, who died in the year 1165.

In the twelfth century this See was incorporated with the ancient bishopric of Roscrea, in the county of Tipperary, and in the year 1752, the diocese of Kilfenora, of which we have already written, was added to the union. The first Protestant bishop of Killaloe was Cornelius O'Dee, a reprobate priest, and a former chaplain to Maurice O'Brien of Thomond, to whom, in consequence of his recantation, Henry VIII. in 1546, assigned the mitre of this See.‡ The bishopric of Killaloe holds ecclesiastical jurisdiction over par-

* KILMACDUACH (signifying in the Irish language the church of the son of the black) is situated in the barony of Kiltartan, county of Galway, at the distance of two miles from the town of Gort. "The church, though small," writes Wenman Seward, author of the *Topographia Hibernica*, "was a very neat building;—the pillars and arches from the entrance to the altar part, and those of the east window, were finished in an elegant style. There is also a holy well here, with a circular enclosure. The round tower at this place, leans 17 1-2 feet from its perpendicular." The country which spreads out its richness and fertility here, has every attribute to command the admiration of the lovers of fine and imposing scenery.

† KILFENORA, a small village in the barony of Corcomroe, county of Clare, is situated in a very pretty part of that county. Seward, in his topographical dictionary, says of this place: "the cathedral is very ancient, but in good repair,—the nave is full of old family ornaments, and in the choir is that of St. Fechnan, its original founder." There are here, also, seven stone crosses, ingeniously sculptured.

‡ KILLALOE (originally written *Kil-dalua*, or the church of St. Molua, the founder of the abbey) is situated in the barony of Tullagh, on the banks of the river Shannon, county of Clare, at the distance of 86 Irish miles from Dublin. The cathedral, originally erected in A. D. 1160, by Daniel O'Brien, King of Limerick, is a venerable pile, built in the form of a cross, of two hundred feet in length. The large Gothic window, over the eastern portal, is elaborately enriched with sculptural mouldings and ornaments. There are several monastic, martial, and sepulchral ruins to be seen in Killaloe.

ishes in the counties of Clare, Tipperary, Limerick, and Galway, as well as in the King's and Queen's counties.

The See of Killala, in the county of Mayo, was founded by St. Muredach, one of the disciples of St. Patrick, in the beginning of the sixth century. In the year 1607, by order of James I., the bishopric of Achonry, in the county of Sligo, was united to that of Killala. The first Protestant bishop of Killala was Eugene O'Connor, who, on making submission to Queen Elizabeth, and renouncing his religion, was invested with the episcopal rights and dignities of this See.*

The ancient See of Achonry, in the county of Sligo, owes its establishment, in the year 530, to St. Finian, the illustrious bishop of Clonard. He appointed and consecrated his scholar, St. Nathy, its first prelate. From the period of the foundation of that diocese until the accession, in A. D. 1170, of Bishop O'Ruadan, we are left without any account of the successors of Nathy. In the year 1607, this See was united to that of Killala.†

To St. Colman, the son of a chieftain of Ardes, county of Down, is the See of Dromore indebted for its origin and erection in the year of 516. He erected a cathedral and an abbey here soon after his elevation to the episcopal throne; the latter is now a pile of ruins, and on the site of the former stands the Protestant church. Before St. Colman obtained the mitre of Dromore, he was abbot of Mockmarragh, county of Antrim. Of the successors of St. Colman we have no historical relation, until the year 1101, when Rigan assumed the episcopal authority of Dromore.‡

John Todd, an Englishman, was the first Protestant bishop of Dromore, to which dignity he was raised by Queen Elizabeth, shortly after her accession to the British throne.

In the year 1661, King Charles II. appointed the celebrated Jeremy Taylor bishop of Dromore. That prelate rebuilt the cathedral, in the cemetery of which his remains, as well as those of three of his successors, bishops Rust, Digby, and Wiseman are interred. The episcopal privileges of this See extend over parts of the coun-

* KILLALA, a large market and post town, is situated on an arm of the great Atlantic Ocean, in the barony of Tirawly, county of Mayo, at the distance of one hundred and twenty-seven Irish miles from Dublin. The old cathedral stands on an insulated eminence in the middle of the town. Here is a noble round tower, of which, in a future chapter, we shall give a description. The country in which Killala is, if we may use the word, crescented, is beautiful, interesting, and picturesque, as it is finely diversified and ornamented by cultivated domains, flowery lawns, fertile corn-fields, and blue-rushing rivers,—all presenting the great charm of scenic effect.

† ACHONRY is a rural village, situated in the barony of Leney, at the distance of sixteen Irish miles S. W. from the town of Sligo.

‡ DROMORE (signifying in Irish the great back of a hill) is a large and populous town, situated in the barony of Iveagh, county of Down, at the distance of 84 English miles north from Dublin. The beautiful river Lagan runs through this town, to which its pastoral banks, studded with embowered villas, and fringed with bleach greens, impart scenic charms of the most sylvan aspect. In the vicinity of Dromore is a lofty and large Rath, from the green summit of which a noble and expansive prospect of the surrounding counties can be commanded. There are feudal and monastic ruins in Dromore, calculated to awake the reflections of the moralist, and the attention of the antiquarian.

ties of Armagh, Down, and Antrim. "The chapter of this diocess," writes SEWARD, "was remodelled, with some peculiar privileges, by a patent of King James I. Among other marks of royal favour, he distinguishes the bishops of this See by the style of 'A. B. by divine Providence, Bishop of Dromore,'—whereas all other bishops in Ireland, except those of Meath and Kildare, are styled by *divine permission*. The cathedral of Dromore is a small but graceful edifice.

The bishopric of Down was founded in the sixth century, by St. Cailan, an Irishman, who had been abbot of *Nendrum*, England. He was consecrated by his fellow-student, St. *Macnisius*, then bishop of Connor. The year of St. Cailan's death is not stated in any history of Down, that we have seen. It appears, however, that he was succeeded in the See of Down, by St. Fergus, abbot of Killagan, county of Antrim, in A. D. 580. "St. Fergus," writes Ware, "son of Engus, was of the blood royal of Ireland. He died on the 30th of March, A. D. 583. As for his successors I have not, I confess, found mention made of any bishop of Down for many centuries after, except one called O'Flaherty, who, according to the annals of the priory of the island of All Saints, died in 1043. And it seems probable enough that almost all that time, this See had no particular bishop, but was comprehended in the diocess of Connor."

The original cathedral erected by St. Cailan, was dedicated to the Holy Trinity, but on the accession of Malachy III. in 1178, the cathedral was rebuilt, chiefly at the expense of John de Courcy, then Lord deputy of Ireland; and, at his request, the bishop consecrated it to the memory of St. Patrick,—“whereby,” says Christopher Pembroke, in his annals, “it was believed that De Courcy drew upon himself those many misfortunes that afterwards attended him.” Bishop Malachy, who expended all his revenues on the repairs of the cathedral, and the endowment of the abbey, died at Down Patrick, in the year 1201.* The Sees of Down and Connor were united in A. D. 1442, which conjunction continues still.

The founder in the year 507, of the bishopric of Connor, was St. Aengus Macnisius, the son of Fobrec. “He died,” says Sir James Ware, “a venerable old man, on the 3d of September, A. D. 514.” There is but little recorded of his successors, for the centuries that elapsed from his death to the arrival of Cardinal John Paparo, as the Pope's legate, in the year 1152, when Patrick O'Baman was prelate. In 1442 Pope Eugene IV. issued a bull directed to the archbishop of Armagh, ordering the union, under the prelacy of John, of the Sees of Down and Connor.† Pope Paul III. conferred

* DOWN PATRICK (or the sacred hill of the Irish Apostle) is the capital of the county of Down, and is distinguished for the beauty and romanticity of its situation, and the wealth and industry of its inhabitants. It is most advantageously situated, in the midst of a rich and cultivated country, distant from the metropolis of Ireland, 72 Irish miles; and from the capacious bay of Strangford, only 7, in a western direction. In a future chapter a more copious description of this town shall be given,—for it is a place of historic recollections—and the scene of memorable transactions. The splendid tomb in which the remains of Saints Patrick, Colum Kill, and Bridgid were deposited, was destroyed, in 1538, by the then Lord Deputy, Leonard de Grey, by whose orders the cathedral was set on fire.

† CONNOR, a small village, in the county of Antrim, which has dwindled to decay, having now nothing to show but the ruins of its ancient cathedral, in attesta-

the See of Connor on Eugene Magenis; who, in 1541, acknowledged the supremacy of Henry VIII., and in consequence, retained the prelacy until his death, which happened in the second year of the reign of Elizabeth.

The bishopric of Clogher, in the county of Tyrone, was established originally, as the antiquarians tell us, by St. Patrick,—for Jocelyn, in his life of the national apostle of Ireland, writes—“that the cathedral church of Clogher, was founded by St. Patrick at first, even before the church of Armagh was built.” Our patron Saint consecrated McCartin, who was descended of a noble family, the first bishop of that See. Bishop McCartin built a cathedral and an abbey there in the year 504. That prelate died in A. D. 506. His successor was St. Tigernac, who, on attaining the mitre, removed his episcopal chair to Clones, in the county of Monaghan, where he died, the 5th of April, A. D. 550.

In the year 1395, while bishop Arthur Cammell was engaged in rebuilding the cathedral of Clogher, a great fire took place, which destroyed that edifice, St. Mary’s abbey, three chapels, and the bishop’s palace. “But,” says Ware, “by the care and industry of this bishop, the church, abbey, and palace were speedily rebuilt.” Until the year 1252, the bishops of Clogher exercised episcopal jurisdiction over the church of Louth, and the three deaneries of Dundalk, Drogheda, and Ardee, which are now subject to the archiepiscopal See of Armagh. Miler Magrath, appointed by Queen Elizabeth, was the first Protestant bishop of Clogher. The cathedral of Clogher is in good repair.*

The See of Raphoe, in the county of Donegal, was founded in the middle of the sixth century by St. Eunan. This Saint erected here, shortly after his consecration, a church and an abbey, which were enlarged and repaired in the eleventh century, by one of his successors. History has not preserved the names of those bishops who were the immediate successors of St. Eunan, in the See of Raphoe. The first prelate, Gilbert O’Caran, of whom Ware and Harris make mention, obtained the mitre of this diocese in A. D. 1172. In A. D. 1360, Patrick Magonail, the then bishop, improved and re-edified the cathedral, and built a magnificent episcopal palace here. He set up a large marble cross, which was finely sculptured, in the cathedral, which remained there until bishop O’Gallagher, in the year 1438, had it removed to the city of Armagh, where it stood a venerable relic of piety, and an impressive monument of ancient art, until July 1816, when a vandal gang of Orangemen broke it into pieces. The author of this history has often seen and admired that magnificent cross, ere it was demolished by the Orange Goths. George Montgomery, a Scotchman, was the first Protestant prelate of Raphoe.†

tion of its primitive consequence. The distance of Connor from Dublin is 89 Irish miles.

* CLOGHER (in Irish the golden stone) is a large town situated on the banks of the river Launy, in the county of Tyrone, at the distance of 104 English miles from Dublin.

† RAPHOE is situated in the county of Donegal, at the distance of 142 English miles from Dublin. It is not a flourishing town, as the proprietors of the soil are

The bishopric of Kildare was established by St. Conlath in A. D. 519. This Saint, as we have before related, in the biography of St. Brigid, died in the first year of his administration. Historical researches have failed in developing any authentic annals of the bishops that presided over this See, from the death of its founder to the arrival of the eleventh century. The first Protestant bishop of Kildare was William Miagh, elevated in 1548 by King Henry VIII.*

By St. Lascorian in A. D. 632, was established the bishopric of Leighlin, in the county of Carlow. He went to Rome for the purpose of being consecrated by Pope Honorius I. That Pontiff was so pleased with the learning and piety of Lascorian, that he appointed him his legate in Ireland. This Saint died at his episcopal seat at Leighlin, in the year 639.

The first Protestant bishop of this See was Matthew Sanders, who conformed to the decree of Henry VIII. In the year 1600, the bishopric of Leighlin was united to that of Ferns, which union still subsists. The diocese of Leighlin comprises eighty-nine parishes in the counties of Wicklow, Carlow, Kilkenny, and in the Queen's county.†

The original establisher, and the first bishop of Ferns, in the county of Wexford, was St. Aedan, or as he has been designated by some of our annalists, Maadhog. According to Ware, he was consecrated in the year 598, who in relation to him writes—"St. Aedan, with the consent of a great synod of Irish prelates, made Ferns the metropolis of all Leinster." "*A great city*," says one of the biographers of that Saint, "*grew up there in honour of him, and was called Ferns,—and afterwards a great Synod being assembled in Leinster, King Brandubh, with the clergy and laity, decreed that the archbishopric of all Leinster should always be in the See of St. Maadhog.*"

The saintly bishop died, very old, at the abbey of Timolin, county of Kildare, two years after he had resigned, in consequence of indisposition, the See of Ferns, in A. D. 632. He was succeeded by St. Moling, whom Gerald Barry, in his Topography of Ireland, styles one of the "four prophets of Ireland." St. Moling died in the year 697. Hugh Allen, an Englishman, was the first Protestant bishop of Ferns.

absentees, and the country around it is not fertile. The bishop's palace is a castellated edifice, in which the antique and modern architectival ornaments are finely contrasted, so as to produce a picturesque effect.

* KILDARE is situated on an eminence which is belted by wood-clad hills, in the barony of Ophaly, at the distance of 32 English miles from Dublin, in a south west direction. It is gradually sinking to decay. As this town is the scene of many memorable events, commemorated in Irish history, and as its fallen but sublime monuments of religious and feudal architecture, possess such impressive attractions for the lovers of the *antique*, we will reserve our description of it for another chapter.

† LEIGHLIN, anciently a city of episcopal and municipal consequence, in the county of Carlow, is now but a small village, without any legitimate pretensions to the pride of wealth, or to the weal of prosperity. Its majestic ruins alone remain as monuments of its past importance. There is a small cathedral here, but its architectural appearance is not very interesting. Leighlin is distant from the city of Dublin about 43 Irish miles. The country in which it is encircled, is beautiful,—as the scenery of the river Barrow, which glides near this town, presents the most interesting features of landscape charms.

“It should be observed,” says an intelligent writer on this subject, “that the prelates presiding over the See of Ferns, were often styled bishops of Wexford, and it is supposed that several entertained the design of removing the See to that more populous town.” Bishop Devereaux, the last Catholic bishop that enjoyed the revenues of this See, was preparing, in 1573, five years before his death, to make a journey to Rome, in order to solicit the Pope for the removal of his episcopal chair to Wexford. The bishopric of Ferns comprehends a space of country of about forty-six miles in length, and eighteen in breadth.*

CHAPTER LVII.

The reign of King Aodh VI.—The first invasion of the Danes; and the different designations bestowed upon them by the Irish.

HAVING in the preceding chapter given what we deemed conducive and necessary to the general interest of our History, a brief account of the Episcopal Sees of Ireland, and a summary biography of their saintly founders, we now return to the continued narration of the reigns of our succeeding monarchs—and of the events which happened during their prevalence. On the death of the last monarch, Donachad, Aodh or Hugh VI., the son of Nial Friasach, was elected King of Ireland, A. D. 979. Early in his reign the Danes effected a landing on the island of Rathlin, opposite Bally Castle, in the county of Antrim.† As soon as they had obtained possession of

* FERNs (or *Fernegenall*, or the pretty place) is a small town, situated in the barony of Scarwalsh, county of Wexford, at the distance of 73 English miles from the city of Dublin. Time and circumstance have reduced the once proud capital of Leinster to the humility of a poor and pretty village. The palace of the Protestant bishop is the only architectival ornament of the town of Ferns.

† RATHLIN (in Irish, *Rath Lionad*, or the Fort of the tide) is situated about eight miles from that part of the Giant's causeway, called Kenbane, or Whitehead, in the county of Antrim. With this island are associated many historical recollections. “It abounds,” writes Seward, “with some curious arrangements of columnar basaltes; and is near five miles in length, and about three and a half in breadth. Rathlin has formerly been, as it were, a stepping stone between the Irish and the Scottish coasts, which the natives of each country alternately used in their various expeditions, and for which they frequently fought. During the disturbances in Scotland between Baliol and Robert Bruce, the latter was obliged to take shelter here with a friend of his;—the remains of a fortress are yet visible in the north angle of the island, celebrated for the defence which this hero made in it, and is, to this day, known by the name of *Bruce's Castle*.”

By a late statistical survey of this island (taken in 1833) it appears that its area covered an extent of the sea of 2000 plantation acres, and that its population amounted to 1140 souls. The island produces fine barley, and the kelp that is manufactured in it is considered the best in Ireland. On one of the summits of this island, 238 feet above the marine level, is a lucid lake of the clearest water. Many, bloody, and desperate, were the battles which were fought in Rathlin, between the Irish and the Scotch. About the middle of the sixth century a monastery was erected here by St. Columbanus, which the Danes in 790 plundered and burned.

the island, they proceeded to commit the most barbarous excesses—they slew St. Feradagh, the abbot of that place, at the very altar,—despoiled the shrines, and then set fire to every town in the devoted island. We will conclude this chapter by an extract from McDERMOTT'S History of Ireland,—an extract that throws a luminous blaze of intelligence and illustration on the invasion of the Danes, and on the great events occurring in Ireland during the eighth and ninth centuries.

“The writers who treat of this period of our history, commence with an inquiry into the origin of these barbarians, who were a scourge not only to Ireland, but to all Europe, for more than 200 years; and yet historians are not sufficiently agreed as to the causes that gave birth to their sudden irruptions into the southern parts of Europe. This is the more surprising, as all Europe had an interest in recording their history. The opinion that has gained most credence is, that people multiply and increase faster in the cold northern than in the southern climates; that the Danes, Swedes, Normans, and other northern nations became consequently overstocked with inhabitants, and were obliged to send the over-abundant population to seek their fortunes in other climes. To this conjecture is added the great plenty of materials for shipping with which the north is supplied, a circumstance which is supposed to have given them a pre-disposition for a naval life. This, however, is a doubtful hypothesis, and accordingly it is rejected by some writers. ‘If ancient historians,’ says Mr. O’Halloran, ‘are sometimes censurable for too easy a credence of historical relations, and for mixing fable with history, what shall we say to modern writers who oppose their own assumptions to both. It must be confessed, that with respect to the depredations of the northern pirates, we have little of certainty to explain to us the cause why for above two centuries, the European seas should be covered with lawless pirates, and different nations felt the force of their power; and why these different depredations should begin almost everywhere about the same time, and cease at nearly an equal period? Semblance of truth too often precludes truth, and superficial readers sometimes embrace the shadow for the substance.

‘The cause of the bursting forth of such numerous northern hives, at this time, has been attributed to a superabundance of inhabitants. The north, say lazy speculatists, has been always a country the most prolific; it is the *officina et vagina gentium*. But, however plausible this appears, like many other refined theories of modern historians, it is but a bare assumption. Every evidence that can be demanded, proves, that at all periods, population has been greater in the southern than in northern climates. The great quantity of unreclaimed ground, even to this day, in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, shews these countries were never overstocked with inhabitants. Whole tracts, covered with woods, and the amazing quantities of it exported, particularly from Norway, prove the thinness of its inhabitants. What are Copenhagen, Stockholm, or Drontheim, compared for extent or inhabitants, to London, Paris, or Dublin? Or what the inhabitants of Europe to those of Asia? Population, to a certainty,

is much greater in warm than in cold climates; but, were we to grant the reverse to be the case, why confine this amazing conflux of people to particular periods? Nature is uniform in all her effects, and the same cause that produced a plethora of inhabitants at one particular period, should, whilst existing, at every other.'

These arguments appear to me philosophical and just, for I can see no reason why the north of Europe should teem with inhabitants at this particular period more than at any other. But it often happens that we possess penetration enough to discover the defects of a theory without being able to establish a better: and it seems to me that the cause which Mr. O'Halloran assigns for the depredations of the northern barbarians is not more satisfactory than that which he has rejected. 'We have already noted,' says he, 'how anxious Charlemagne and Pepin, their predecessors, were to convert the northern nations of Germany, and the active part which the Irish missionaries took in this great work. In all appearance, policy united with religion in these pursuits, as every convert they made was a new subject acquired. These German nations, who so manfully defended their liberties, plainly saw that the religion of the invaders was as inimical as their swords, and began to form a general confederacy against both. Driven into a narrower compass they became more compact and numerous, and their religion and their liberties being equally the objects of these conquerors, they confederated to defend both. Not numerous enough to face their enemies by land, and being powerful at sea, they determined to make their diversions this way. Very probably necessity first drove them to try the expedient, and unexpected success increased their confidence. The historian, Mezaray, attributes the depredations of these northern nations to their love of liberty, and their detestation of those priests and religions who destroyed their gods and their altars. Hence, says he, their greatest cruelty was exercised on monks and monasteries. For this reason it is, that they are frequently styled, in our annals, *dubh-geinte*, or black infidels, and *fion-geinte*, or white infidels; and as a farther proof of this, it appears, that as christianity began to spread amongst them, the rage of invasion began gradually to subside. What avails it that the acts of nations are the result of some general principles, if the historian, whose duty it is, will not be at the trouble of exploring them.'

This account of the origin of the Danish invasions is, in my opinion, less satisfactory than that which the doctor has rejected. The character of these public robbers forbid us to attribute their unprovoked hostilities and wanton exercise of dominion, when obtained, to the impulse of a virtuous principle—namely, the defence of their country and their religion. The fact is, that these northern hords laughed to scorn the control of moral and religious duties. They made war not *pro aris et focis*, not to defend their own habitations, but to destroy and lay waste the habitations of others. The truth appears to be, that though the northern countries are not more productive of the human species than the southern, yet their inhabitants must, in course of time, become too numerous to be supported by the spontaneous productions of a cold penurious soil; and we know

from the history of these countries, that agriculture was entirely neglected among them. The western Scythians, who were the ancestors of the Swedes, Goths, Danes, and Norwegians, led a wandering life, fixing themselves now in one place, and now in another, still driving before them their flocks and herds ; but these flocks and herds could never become numerous, while supported only by the scanty pasture of the northern climes, and the inhabitants progressively increasing, though not in the same ratio with the southern regions, must have necessarily become straitened for means of subsistence. It is easy to perceive, that a people thus situated, and accustomed to a vagrant life, would still pursue the same course which they had followed from time immemorial ; and move on farther to the south, from which they could have no possible inducement to return among the starved population which they had abandoned. They must, however, be soon visited by their forsaken kindred, who still increasing, not having means of subsistence at home, must have followed the example that was wisely set before them. This progressive motion to the south must have continued while agriculture was neglected, and a wandering life rendered agreeable by habit. The delicacies of the south could not, however, be tasted without being coveted by a people always inured to rough and simple fare, and finding the inhabitants comparatively an effeminate race of men, and less disposed to the turbulence and bustle of war, it is natural to conceive that these hardy Hyperboreans, already accustomed to a vagabond life, should rank with alacrity under the banners of their enterprising chiefs, when they chose to lead them to the spoils of richer but less enterprising nations. The trial once made, and the spoils once enjoyed, proved a sufficient stimulus to renewed attempts. Accordingly we find that colonies from Gothland spread themselves over the islands of the Baltic sea, and that these again scattering by degrees, penetrated as far as the Cimbrica Chersonesus, or the peninsula of the Cimbric. The local advantage of all these countries peculiarly fitted the inhabitants to lead a piratical life. Jutland, Sleswick, Holstein, &c. are in all parts intersected by arms of the sea, and, when we add to this, the great abundance of timber and materials for ship building, we need not be surprised if such a people should become enamoured of a naval life, especially when it promised them the treasured wealth of distant nations. Accordingly, we find that piracy was deemed honorable among the Danes ; for this, we have the authority of Olaus Wormius, who says, *Antiquitus apud Danos piratica honesta ac licita erat atque in ea se crebro reges ipsi aut eorum liberi exercebant, ascitis famosissimis et fortissimis athletis.** Having shared whatever spoils they obtained with their kings and chiefs, no wonder that the latter should, as we find they did, lead them in person when any enterprize of importance was undertaken. We find that the corsairs of Barbary still practise this profession ; and so would the inhabitants of the north, if the political aspect of Europe had not undergone a complete revolution since

* Piracy was deemed honorable, and licensed among the Danes, and even kings exercised themselves and their children in this profession, associating with them the most celebrated and hardest warriors.

these disastrous times. This revolution, however, could not affect the corsairs of Barbary as it did the Goths and Danes. The effects resulting from the political revolutions of Europe can reach only to a certain extent, or if, like a burning meteor, they sometimes gleam with unexpected light in distant climes, yet like an artificial storm, they rage without danger, and are surveyed without terror. The standing armies and improved policy of the European powers having first checked the effects, at length extinguished the spirit of piracy among the northern states; but Barbary was too far removed from the influence of this policy, to be affected by the formidable barrier which it opposed to the northern pirates, and what required only a single effort to crush an enemy, immediately within reach, required many efforts to destroy one who wounded from afar. It is true the European powers could put an end to the profession of piracy among the corsairs of Barbary, if they once engaged in so sacred a cause, and it may with some reason be demanded why have they not done so? No doubt political considerations have partly prevented them from it, but certain it is that if they had never been guided by the short-sighted views of a niggard, of a reptile policy—a policy degrading to humanity, and hostile to the general interests of mankind, yet they would have many difficulties to encounter which never presented themselves in subduing the piratical spirit among the people of the north. They should not only keep a standing army in Barbary, but civilize the rude and ferocious manners of the inhabitants by sending European colonies to reside among them.

The northern pirates were known to the southern states of Europe by different names. In France they were called Normans, or men of the North; in England they were styled Ostmen, or men of the East, because the Livonians and other eastern tribes of northern Europe joined in their depredations; in Ireland they got the appellation of Loch-Lannachs, or powerful at sea, and were distinguished into the white and black. But though the name Loch-Lannachs was the most generic term by which they were known in Ireland, they had, however, various other appellations expressive of the different countries from which they came. ‘One tribe of them,’ says O’Halloran, ‘were called Leth-Manni, and these archbishop Usher and O’Coury,* judge were Livonians, whose province is called Letten, and by geographers Letta; hence Leth-Manni, or the people of Letta. Others were called Fionne-Gail, and Dubh-Gail, or white and black strangers, from the colour of their hair. The first were, to all appearance, the Danes—Swedes and Norwegians, who are generally fair-haired, and the others, Germans. A territory near Dublin yet retains the name of Finn-Gall; and Dunegall is probably a corruption of Dubh-Gail, or the country of the black strangers. But the most general names they are distinguished by, amongst us, are Dubh-Loch-Lannice, and Fionn-Loch-Lannice; the word Loch-Lannach signifies powerful at sea, and the adjectives, Dubh black, and Fionn white, were added to denote their different countries by their hair. We also sometimes find them called Danair-Fonh, and

* Laws of Tanistry illustrated, p. 489.

Dan-Fir; but I believe these were rather words of reproach than an implication of the country from whence they came, because they are rarely met with, and Irish writers were not fond of reproachful epithets to their enemies. They were called Dan-Fhir, I conjecture, from *Dana*, bold, impetuous, oppressive, and *Fear*, a man; hence Dan, Fhir, or Dan-Airimh, oppressive men.' So much for the northern pirates, and the names by which they were known. We come now to notice their first visits to the Irish coasts.

In 798 the White Loch-Lannachs made a descent in the west of Munster, and committed many depredations, plundering churches and monasteries, and putting the clergy to the sword. Munster was at this time governed by Art or Airtree, who collected what forces the exigency of the time would admit, and attacking the Danes, in a general engagement, obtained so complete a victory, that if the night had not favoured their retreat to their ships, it is supposed they would have all fallen victims to the deserved vengeance of the Munster army.

The year following the monarch levied a powerful army, with which he invaded Leinster, to enforce the payment of the justly detested and long exacted tribute of the barome. The archbishop of Armagh, and his suffragan bishops, were called upon to attend the royal forces, pursuant to a custom which seems to have then prevailed. There is no reason to suppose that this custom was first introduced under the sanction of the christian code, and therefore it is not unlikely, that it was a relict of the druidic policy, for we find that the druid priests attended the army, and were always very active in exciting and encouraging their deluded votaries. Of this we have an account in the capture of Mona by the Roman army, and we are particularly informed that it was the policy of St. Patrick, and a wise policy it was, to alter none of the established practices and customs, which obtained among the Druids, where no dogma of religion was involved, or no principle of christian morality sacrificed. But from whomsoever this custom derived its origin, Cormac, who was then archbishop of Armagh, protested against the propriety and the decency of obliging the ministers of peace to be the witnesses of all the evils and horrors of war: he therefore besought the monarch to grant the clergy a dispensation from this unbecoming office, nor to impose upon them the necessity of performing, not a duty, but what was strictly a violation of the most sacred functions of ecclesiastical decorum. Fothodius, surnamed *de Canonibus*, from his great knowledge of the canon law, was consulted by the monarch, and he drew up a statement of his opinion, entitled *opusculum pro cleri defensione et immunitate*, in which he vindicated the cause of the clergy, and the justice of the exemption which they demanded. His arguments prevailed, and a decree was made, absolving them from all future attendance on the royal forces.*

The Danes, not intimidated by the ill success that attended their arms in their last attempt on the Munster coasts, resolved to make a second trial of their strength, and invaded Munster in 804, when

* Act. Sanct. Hib. p. 581, 583.

Feidhlim was king of that province. They plundered and destroyed every thing that came in their way, but their vengeance was particularly directed against the clergy and the churches. Feidhlim collected all the troops that could be suddenly mustered, and attacking the Danes, gained a complete victory over them, forcing those who escaped the sword to take refuge in their ships.*

The year following Ulster received a visit from these barbarians ; their impious arms were, as usual, chiefly directed against the clergy ; they stripped the famous abbey of Benchoirt of all its riches, put the abbot and 900 monks to the sword, and among other relics of piety carried off the shrine of St. Comhail, the founder of this celebrated institution. They had soon, however, to repent the triumph of their impiety : attacked by Muireadach, the Ulster king, they were defeated in battle, 1200 of their troops slain, and the rest driven to their wooden entrenchments, carrying with them, it is true, if not the glory of present triumph, at least the spoils of former victories—victories which, though ingloriously obtained, proved a sufficient stimulus to induce their ragged kindred to join them in new enterprises against the peace and happiness of an unoffending people.

The dangers that were justly to be apprehended from foreign enemies could not, however, restore unanimity to the counsels of the Irish princes. The ministers of Feidhlim, king of Munster, more studious of domestic broils than provident either of their own interests or the general safety, advised their master, equally perhaps intoxicated as themselves with the delirium of military fame that *ca-coethes bellandi*, which proved the source of all their national misfortunes, to oblige Lachtna, king of North Munster, to pay him tribute. Ambassadors were despatched, accordingly, to make demands, which, though they might appear reasonable to that lust of power which aimed at more absolute dominion by an increased revenue, could not, however, be justified, either by prescriptive right, nor any tortured explication of the national laws. Precedents, it is true, were not wanting of the imposition of unjust tributes, exacted, however, in consequence of injuries received, or some other specious

* Cógadh-Gal, ne Gaoidealhaibh.

† BANGOR is now a pretty and pleasing little town, situated on the sea coast, in the barony of Ardes, county of Down, about six miles from Donaghadee. The famous abbey which the Danes plundered in A. D. 793, was founded in the year 555 by St. Congall. The biographer of this Saint says of him :—" he was a native of Ulster ; he built the great monastery of Bangor, near the eastern sea, and a vast multitude of monks came thither, insomuch, that one place could not contain them ; so that he had to build many monasteries and cells, not only in the Ardes, but throughout all Ireland, in which were 3000 monks, men remarkable for the extent of their erudition, and the fervour of their piety, under the care and government of the holy father St. Congall." The harbour of Bangor is deep and spacious, whence vast numbers of cattle are annually shipped for England. It is a fashionable bathing place, much frequented by the wealthy people of Belfast. The road running along the shore, from Bangor to Belfast, is fringed on both sides by beautiful and romantic scenery—by villas shaded by groves, and by fields margined by hedges of hawthorn and honey suckle.

The domains of Lord Dufferin, and of Colonel Ward, entwine as it were, the town of Bangor in a garland of rural magnificence and sylvan grace. March, 1836.

pretence of rights, but though every species of injustice is at variance with truth and honesty, yet every species of injustice is not equally criminal and malignant—and he who acts unjustly when provoked—he who does not religiously examine the measure of punishment, which a just sense of injuries would have pointed out, but inflicts vengeance with an unsparing and indiscriminating hand, is still not so criminal as he, who without provocation, or any assignable cause, coolly and deliberately commits what has not even the sanction which the frailty of our own nature obliges us to allow to others, when acting under the influence of excited passions. Sensible of the injustice of his demands, and anticipating a consequent refusal, Feidhlim levied a strong army, with which he followed his ambassadors, but the Dalgais were neither to be intimidated nor wheedled into concession by the threats of Feidhlim, or the superiority of his numbers. They informed his ambassadors, that they were always a free people, that their possessions were *Fearhan forgabala na Cloidhimh*,—ancient sword land,—and that they would not now relinquish a right which all the power of Connaught had never been able to wrest from their ancestors.

The bishops of Limeric, Killaloe, and Inis-Catha endeavoured to soften a reply, better calculated to provoke the utmost vengeance of a lawless invader, than to move him to a consideration of the manifold evils that must unavoidably ensue from domestic broils, and the invasion of civil rights. Religion, which has been often made the instrument of many national calamities in the hands of the designing, has also proved a source of national blessings and national unanimity in the heads of the good. To its salutary influence we must, in the present instance, attribute the reconciliation of the contending parties—a reconciliation so rarely effected in all former wars. The bishops, in treating with Feidhlim's ambassadors, not only availed themselves of those strong and cogent arguments in favour of peace, which religion so abundantly supplies, but had influence enough to persuade Lachtna, the son of Core, who then ruled in North Munster, to go in person and wait upon Feidhlim, who, flattered by this mark of respect, and convinced of the injustice of his proceedings, particularly against a family, who, though they claimed alternate succession to the crown of Munster, by the will of their common ancestor Olioll, had been forcibly deprived of their right for many years, relinquished his claims, and satisfied with receiving homage from Lachtna, as king of Munster, entertained him splendidly, and dismissed him with assurances of his sincere and lasting friendship.

Feidhlim, who embraced a monastic life, was succeeded by Olcubar, of the Eugenic line. The Danes, undismayed by former defeats, disturbed his reign by a new invasion: they landed in Waterford, A. D. 812, and committed, as usual, the most shocking barbarities. They pillaged and afterwards burned the city and university of Lismore, carrying off whatever could gratify the appetites or excite the admiration of a barbarous crew. It has been said that barbarians are by nature enemies to learning, and this assertion would seem to require no further confirmation than the conduct of

the Danes, if conclusions relative to the nature of man, and his aversions and propensities, could be drawn from the practice of an entire nation; for the Danes manifested a determined hostility to learning and its votaries. So far from wishing to convey to their own barbarous shores the treasures of ancient literature contained in the famous library of Lismore, they committed them all to the flames. This censure, however, is unfounded, if, by barbarians, we mean all uncivilized people—all people living in the state of nature; for it is certain, that if man, in the state of nature, was naturally an enemy to literature and the fine arts, they would never have flourished in any country, as all countries have been originally in this state. It appears to me that the character of savage or barbarous no more belongs to the state of uncultivated nature than it does to civilized society. If this were to be conceded, what becomes of the dignity of man, that lord of the universe, that deity of the third planet, who has rendered the universal tribe of inferior animals obedient to his will, and to the promotion of whose happiness all their appetites and instincts have been rendered subservient? What becomes of this presuming, this aspiring mortal, if he has been created a savage, stamped with all the characters of ferocious barbarity, an enemy to those arts which extend his knowledge, sublime his intellect, and open to his view the perfections and the attributes of the great author of his being. Has God destined this man, who is born and who dies a brute, to be the partner of his own kingdom, an inmate of the celestial inhabitants who are never defiled by the stain of any thing impure. Surely we must grant it, if the savage state and the state of nature be the same—if God has not given to man in that state in which he originally placed him, all the means of rendering himself worthy that dignity for which he was created. Has God intended him for Heaven, and yet given him a savage disposition that renders him unfit for it, but which, however, he may never have an opportunity of softening or refining, if this can only be done by cultivation and science. He who could convince me of this, could also convince me that God never intended man for future happiness, inasmuch as he stamped him with a ferocious untractable disposition, which was directly opposed to that course of life which alone could secure it—a disposition too, which he could never divest himself of while he remained in the state of nature. If, then, only culture and civilization can alter the original ferocity of man's nature, his hopes of a future happiness depend on a mere contingency—the chance of becoming a civilized being—but in this case there are more chances against him than for him: entire nations are still in the state of nature, among whom arts and civilization may not be introduced for some centuries to come; and even among civilized nations, what numbers are there whose eternal toil for a mere existence, preclude, and ever will preclude, the possibility of their attaining to that polish and refinement which the poet says—

Emollit mores,
Nec sinit esse feros.——

To me, it appears that art and science do not always improve the work of God; that an uncultivated peasant who never left his native

mountains, is, with few exceptions, more sincere in his professions, more ardent in his wishes to do good, more devoted in his friendships, more attached to his family and to his kindred, more tenacious of his promises, and more observant of all his moral duties, though not so curious in ascertaining their nature and extent, than those who direct the judgment and guide the taste of civilized society—I mean of the literary tribe, whether philosophers, poets, politicians, or moralists. Among whom do jealousies, enmities, pride, affectation, self-sufficiency, uncharitableness, and all the anti-social vices more prevail than among this class of society—and yet these are those who are farthest removed from that state which is called savage and barbarous. The progress of science is always dangerous to man, when it outstrips in its pace, the progress of religion; and happily for the state of nature, the savage, as he is called, can discern the light of religion, and the truths which it conveys, as clearly as the acutest metaphysician, or the most philosophic moralist.

But to return to the Danes, it would seem that so many defeats should have checked the courage and cooled the ardour of these invaders, more especially, if to the feelings occasioned by so many losses and disappointments were superadded the reflection that they fought not against man, but against heaven. They fought against truth, justice, and the law of nature, and their battles were as yet attended with that success which their cause deserved. It might therefore be expected that an opinion which seems to have prevailed from the remotest antiquity, and which appears to have more influence with unlettered and superstitious nations than with polished states—that Heaven favours the just cause—should have deterred them from future attempts, after finding the truth of this opinion confirmed by sad experience. But if we must reprobate the injustice of their cause, we must admire their unshaken and determined resolution to effect their purpose. Three years after their last defeat they landed off Kingshead, and plundered the monastery of Skelig-Mhichel. They committed many other depredations before they reached Loch-Lane, where they were attacked and defeated by the Irish, who recovered a considerable portion of their accumulated spoils.

Soon after they appeared in the Shannon, and their troops made incursions on either side, where they committed, as usual, numerous atrocities before their progress was checked. They burned several churches, among which are numbered those of Scatterry or Inis-Catha, particularly noted for the costly monument of St. Senanus, which they defaced. The Irish overtook them near Glin, where they were as usual routed and driven to their ships. ‘Though it appears,’ says Mr. O’Halloran, ‘that wherever the Irish and these foreigners met, the latter were in general defeated, yet the country was destroyed before-hand by reason of their commanding the sea, and being at all times able to land where least expected. Though the ravages of these Danes were alone as much afflictions as could be well borne, yet the very elements seemed to conspire to the ruin of this afflicted kingdom; on the northern side of the Shannon, in

the month of March following, such violent and uncommon claps of thunder and lightning burst forth, that about a thousand people were destroyed by it; at the same time the sea broke down the banks with great violence, and laid a considerable part of the country under water.'

Such is the dismal aspect which these portentous times present—times pregnant with the seeds of those approaching calamities and disasters to which Ireland has been exposed from that ominous period, almost to the commencement of the present century, and which, perhaps, facilitated her subsequent conquest by the English crown.

The monarch who seems to have remained an inactive spectator of these scenes, reigned 24 years. In so long a period he should have taken measures to secure his kingdom against the predatory incursions of a foreign enemy; but, unhappily for the peace of Ireland, such was the constitution of its government, that it separated the affection of the monarch from his people, and that of the people from their reputed sovereign. Out of the province of Meath, the monarch had only four subjects—the four provincial kings—for their subjects knew nothing of allegiance to the monarch. In all civil commotions they flew to the standards of their respective chiefs, and they would deem it treason to fight in behalf of the monarch, if their own prince had declared against him. Hence, the monarch had more difficulty in securing the obedience of the provincial kings, than he would in securing the affections, the loyalty, and the fidelity of the entire people. The train of evils that emanated from this grand political error in the constitution is far more numerous than might appear on a partial view of the subject, but of all these evils the most prominent and the most fatal to the repose of the state, were the want of patriotism, and the want of unanimity in the national counsels. Of patriotism, in a confined sense, the Irish were not destitute: they were all devotedly attached to their respective provinces, septs, and chiefs, but they knew nothing of that expanded impulse, which, confining itself not to a point, would have taught them to love all their countrymen with the same undistinguishing attachment. Unhappily their attachments were confined to local districts and territories, which entirely arose from the genius of their constitution; nor would it be difficult to make it appear that patriotism assumed the same form in every country where similar political obstacles were opposed to its expansion. The present monarch Aodh, regardless of the general welfare, and leaving each of the provincial kings to secure himself against the incursions of the Danes, as well as he could, thought only of securing that shadow of power with which he was invested, and fell accordingly in attempting to preserve it from insult in a battle with his own subjects, the Connacians."

CHAPTER LVIII.

State of Learning and the Arts in Ireland during the eighth and ninth centuries.

WE copy the following chapter, which displays much research and antiquarian information from MOORE'S History of Ireland. "In a preceding chapter of this volume there has been submitted to the reader most of the evidence, as well incidental as direct, suggested by various writers, in support of the belief, that the use of letters was known to the pagan Irish. But, perhaps, one of the most convincing proofs, that they were at least acquainted with this gift before the time when St. Patrick introduced among them the Christian doctrine, is to be found in the immediate display of mind and talent which the impulse of that great event produced,—in the rapidity with which they at once started forth as scholars and missionaries, and became, as we have seen, the instructors of all Europe, at a time when, according to some, they were but rude learners themselves. It is, indeed, far easier to believe—what there is besides such strong evidence to prove—that the elements of learning were already known to them when St. Patrick and his brother missionaries arrived, than that the seeds then for the first time sown should have burst forth in so rich and sudden a harvest.

To the question,—Where, then, are any of the writings of those pagan times? where the tablets, the manuscripts, even pretending to be of so ancient a date?—it can only be answered, that the argument involved in this question would apply with equal force to the two or three centuries succeeding the time of St. Patrick, when, as all know, not merely letters, but the precious fruits of those elements, literature and the sciences, had begun to spring up in Ireland. And yet, of that long and comparatively shining period, when the schools of this country attracted the attention of all Europe; when the accomplished Cumman drew from thence his stores of erudition, and Columba's biographer acquired in them his Latin style; when Columbanus carried to Gaul, from the celebrated school of Banchor, that knowledge of Greek and Hebrew which he afterwards displayed in his writings, and the acute Virgilius went forth, enriched with the various science which led him to anticipate the discovery of the sphericity of the earth;—of all that period, in Ireland, abounding as it was in scholars and writers extraordinary for their time, not a single authentic manuscript now remains; not a single written relic, such as ought to convince that class of sceptics who look to direct proofs alone, that the art of writing even existed in those days. The very same causes—the constant ravages of invasion and the blind fury of internal dissension—which occasioned the destruction and loss of manuscripts between the time of St. Patrick and the ninth or tenth century, account with still stronger force for the disappearance of all earlier vestiges of writing; and, in fact, the more recent and scanty at present are the remains of the acknowledged era of Irish literature, the more it weakens the argu-

ment drawn from the want of any such visible relics of the ages preceding it.*

We have seen that a manuscript copy of the Four Gospels, still extant, is said to have been written by the hand of St. Columbkil; and to this copy Dr. O'Connor triumphantly refers, as affording an irrefragable answer to those who deny the existence of any Irish manuscript of an older date than the tenth century. But the zeal of this amiable scholar in the cause of his country's antiquities, and the facility with which, on most points connected with that theme, he adopts as proved what has only been boldly asserted, render even him, with all his real candour and learning, not always a trustworthy witness; and the result of the researches on this point, in Ireland, of one whose experience in the study of manuscripts, combined with his general learning, render him an authority of no ordinary weight,† is, that the oldest Irish manuscript which has been discovered in that country, is the Psalter of Cashel, written in the latter end of the ninth century.

For any remains, therefore, of our vernacular literature before that period, which have reached us, we are indebted to Tigernach,‡ and the annalists preceding him, through whom a few short pieces of ancient poetry have been transmitted; and to those writers of the tenth century, who, luckily taking upon themselves the office of compilers, have made us acquainted with the contents of many curious works which, though extant in their times, have since been lost. Among the fragments transmitted through the annalists are some distichs by the arch-poet Dubtach, one of St. Patrick's earliest converts, the antiquated idiom of which is accounted, by Irish scholars, to be in itself a sufficient proof of their authenticity. A few other fragments from poets of that period have been preserved by the same trustworthy chronicler; and it appears on the whole highly probable, that while abroad, as we have seen, such adventurous Irishmen as Pelagius and Cælestius were entering into the lists with the great champions of orthodoxy,—while Sedulius was taking his place among the later Latin classics,—there were also, in Ireland itself, poets, or Fileas, employing their native language, and either

* The absurd reasoning of the opponents of Irish antiquities on this point has been well exposed by the English writer just cited:—"The more recent they can by any means make this date, the greater, in their opinion, is the objection to the authenticity of Irish history, and to the pretensions of the national antiquarians to an early use of letters among their countrymen." He afterwards adds:—"If we possess so few Irish manuscripts, written before the twelfth century, it is plain that, by adducing this circumstance, they the more clearly ascertain the extent of those disturbances which destroyed every historical record prior to the tenth, and which must have been far more effectual in causing to perish every remains of the fifth age."—*Analysis of the Antiq. of Ireland*.

† Astle, *Origin and Progress of Writing*.

‡ TIGERNACH, the famous abbot of Clonmacnois, and of Roscommon, possessed abilities of the highest literary order. His annals of Ireland from the earliest periods down to the year of his death, 1088, furnish valuable materials for the Irish historian and antiquary. From his work, Bishop Lynch of Killala, made many translations. Of the learned Bishop Lynch we will speak at large, hereafter. Sir James Ware had, according to his own assertion, several of the manuscripts of Tigernach in his possession when he wrote his *Account of Irish Writers*. Boston, March, 1836.

then recently quickened into exertion by the growing intercourse of their country with the rest of Europe, or forming but links, perhaps, of a long bardic succession extending to remote times.

According as we descend the stream of his Annals, the metrical fragments cited by Tigernach become more numerous; and a poet of the seventh century, Cenfaelad, furnishes a number of these homely ornaments of his course. The singular fate of the monarch, Murcertach, who, in the year 534, was drowned in a hogshead of wine, seems to have formed a favourite theme with the poets, as no less than three short pieces of verse on this subject have been preserved by the annalists, written respectively by the three poets, Cernach, Sin, and Cenfaeled. In these, as in all the other fragments assigned to that period, there is to be found, as the learned editor of the Irish Chronicles informs us, a peculiar idiom and structure of verse, which denotes them to be of the early date to which they are assigned. It would appear, indeed, that the modern contrivance of rhyme, which is generally supposed to have had a far other source, may be traced to its origin in the ancient *rans* or *rins*, as they termed their stanzas, of the Irish. The able historian of the Anglo-Saxons, in referring to some Latin verses of Aldhelm, which he appears to consider as the earliest specimen of rhyme now extant, professes himself at a loss to discover whence that form of verse could have been derived.* But already, before the time of Aldhelm, the use of rhyme had been familiar among the Irish, as well in their vernacular verses as in those which they wrote in Latin. Not to dwell on such instances, in the latter language, as the Hymns of St. Columba, respecting whose authenticity there may be some question, an example of Latin verses interspersed with rhyme is to be found among the poems of St. Columbanus,† which preceded those of Aldhelm by near half a century. So far back, indeed, as the fifth century, another Irish poet, Sedulius, had, in some of the verses of his well-known hymn on the Life of Christ, left a specimen of much the same sort of rhyme.‡ As practised most generally, in their own

* "Here, then," says Mr. Turner, "is an example of rhyme in an author who lived before the year 700, and he was an Anglo-Saxon. Whence did he derive it? Not from the Arabs: they had not yet reached Europe."

† Beginning,

"Mundus iste transit et quotidie decrescit:
Nemo vivens manebit, nullus vivus remansit."

Though the rhymes, or coincident sounds, occur thus, in general, on the final syllable, there are instances throughout the poem of complete double rhymes. As, for instance,

"Dilexerunt tenebras tetras magis quam lucem;
Imitari contemnunt vitæ Dominum Ducem,
Velut in somnis regnent, una hora lætantur,
Sed æterna tormenta adhuc illis parantur."

‡ The following lines from this hymn will afford a specimen of the Irish method of rhyming:—

"A solus ortus cardine, ad usque terræ limitem,
Christum canamus principem—natum Maria virgine."

But it is still more correctly exemplified in a hymn in honour of St. Brigid, written, as some say, by Columbkil; but, according to others, by St. Ultan, of Ardbraccan. See Usher, Eccles. Primord. 963.

"Christum in nostra insula—quæ vocatur Hibernia,
Ostensus est hominibus—maximis mirabilibus, &c."

language, by the Irish, this method consisted in rhyming at every hemistich, or, in other words, making the syllable in the middle of the line rhyme to that of the end; much in the manner of those verses called, in the twelfth century, Leonine, from the name of the writer who had best succeeded in them. According to this 'art of the Irish,'* as it was styled, most of the distichs preserved by Tigernach from the old poets were constructed; and it is plain that Aldhelm, whose instructor, Maidulph, was a native of Ireland, must have derived his knowledge of this, as well as of all other literary accomplishments of that day, from the lips of his learned master. How nearly bordering on jealousy was his own admiration of the schools of the Irish has been seen in the sarcastic letter addressed by him to Eaghfrid, who had just returned from a course of six years' study in that country, overflowing, as it would appear, with gratitude and praise.

In its infant state, poetry has been seldom separated from music; and it is probable that most of the stanzas cited by the annalists were meant originally to be associated with song. Of some of the juvenile works of St. Columbanus we are told, that they were 'worthy of being sung;'† and a scene brought vividly, in a few words, before our eyes, by the Irish biographer of Columba, represents that holy man as sitting, along with his brethren, upon the banks of the beautiful lake Kee,‡ while among them was a poet skilled, we are told, in modulating song to verse, 'after the manner of his art.' That it was to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument, called the Cruit, they performed these songs or chants, appears to be the most general opinion. In some distichs on the death of Columba, preserved in the annals of the Four Masters, we find mention of this kind of harp§ in rather a touching passage:—"Like a song of the cruit without joy, is the sound that follows our master to the tomb;" and its common use in the eighth century, as an accompaniment to the voice, may be implied from Bede's account of the religious poet Ceadmon, who, in order to avoid taking a part in the light songs of society, always rose, as he tells us, from table when the harp was sent round, and it came to his turn to sing and play. The Italians, who are known to have been in possession of the harp before the

* From the following account of the metrical structure of Irish verse, it will be seen that it was peculiarly such as the people of strong musical feeling (and with whom the music was the chief object) would be likely to invent and practise:—

"The rhythm consists in an equal distance of intervals, and similar terminations, each line being divisible into two, that it may be more easily accommodated to the voice and the music of the bards. It is not formed by the nice collocation of long and short syllables, but by a certain harmonic rhythm, adjusted to the voice of song by the position of words which touch the heart and assist the memory."—*Essay by Doctor Drummond, Trans. of Royal Irish Acad.* vol. xvi.

† "Ad canendum digna,"—so pronounced by his biographer Jonas.

‡ In the county of Roscommon.

§ Of this instrument, the harp, the Irish are said to have had four different species; the clarseach, the keirnine, the cronar cruit, and the creamtheine cruit; for all of which see Walker, *Hist. Mem. of Irish Bards*, Beauford, *ibid.*, Appendix, and Ledwich's *Antiquities*. What Montfaucon, however, says of the different names given to the lyre, among the ancients, may also, perhaps, be applicable here:—"Among this great diversity I cannot but think the same instrument must often be signified by different names."

time of Dante, are, by a learned musician of their own country, Galilei, said to have derived it from Ireland; the instrument, according to his account, being no other than a cithara with many strings, and having, at the time when he wrote, four octaves and a tone in compass.

How little music, though so powerful in its influence on the feelings, either springs from, or is dependent upon, intellect, appears from the fact, that some of the most exquisite effusions of this art have had their origin among the simplest and most uncultivated people; nor can all that taste and science bring afterwards to the task do more, in general, than diversify, by new combinations, those first wild strains of gaiety or passion into which nature had infused her original inspiration. In Greece the sweetness of the ancient music had already been lost, when all the other arts were but on their way to perfection;* and from the account given by Giraldus Cambrensis,† of the Irish harpers of the twelfth century,‡ it may be inferred that the melodies of the country, at the earlier period of which we are speaking, was in some degree like the first music of the infant age of Greece, and partook of the freshness of that morning of mind and hope which was then awakening around them.

With respect to the structure of the ancient Irish harp, there does not appear to have been any thing accurately ascertained; but, from that retentiveness of all belonging to the past which we have shown to have characterized this people, it appears most probable that their favourite instrument was kept sacredly unaltered: and remained the same perhaps in later times, when it charmed the ears of English poets and philosophers,§ as when it had been modulated by the bard Cronan, in the sixth century, upon the banks of the lake Kee.

* See Anacharsis, chap. 27, notes v. vii. "It is remarkable," says Wood, "that the old chaste Greek melody was lost in refinement before their other arts had acquired perfection."—*Essay on Homer*.

† *Topograph. Dist.* 3. c. 11. This curious passage, which appears, though confusedly, even to imply that the Irish were acquainted with counterpoint, is prefaced by a declaration that in their music alone does he find any thing to commend in that people:—"In musicis solum instrumentis commendabilem invenio gentis istæ diligentiam." The passage in question is thus translated in Mr. Walker's *Hist. Mem. of the Irish Bards*:—"It is wonderful how, in such precipitate rapidity of the fingers, the musical proportions are preserved; and by their art, faultless throughout, in the midst of their complicated modulations, and most intricate arrangement of notes, by a rapidity so sweet, a regularity so irregular, a concord so discordant, the melody is rendered harmonious and perfect, whether the chords of the diatesseron or diapente are struck together; yet they always begin in a soft mood, and end in the same, that all may be perfect in the sweetness of delicious sounds. They enter on, and again leave, their modulations with so much subtilty, and the tinglings of the small strings sport with so much freedom, under the deep notes of the bass," &c. &c.

‡ "Even so late as the eleventh century," says Warton, "the practice continued among the Welsh bards of receiving instructions in the Bardic profession from Ireland."—*Hist. of English Poetry*.

§ Alluding to such tributes as the following, —

"The Irish I admire
And still cleave to that lyre,
As our muse's mother;
And think, till I expire,
Apollo's such another."

Drayton.

"The harp," says Bacon, "hath the concave not along the strings, but across

It would appear that the church music, likewise, of the Irish, enjoyed no inconsiderable repute in the seventh century, as we find Gertrude, the daughter of the potent Maire du Palais, Pepin, sending to Ireland for persons qualified to instruct the nuns of the abbey of Nivelles in psalmody; and the great monastery of Bangor, or Benchoir, near Carrickfergus, is supposed, by Ware, to have derived its name from the White Choir which belonged to it.* A certain sect of antiquarians, whose favourite object is to prove that the Irish church was in no respect connected with Rome, have imagined some mode by which, through the medium of Asiatic missionaries, her Chant or Psalmody might have been derived to her directly from the Greeks. But their whole hypothesis is shown to be a train of mere gratuitous assumption; and it is little doubted that, before the introduction of the Latin, or Gregorian Chant, by St. Malachy, which took place in the twelfth century, the style of music followed by the Irish, in their church service, was that which had been introduced by St. Patrick and his companions from Gaul.†

The religious zeal which, at this period, covered the whole island with monasteries and churches, had not, in the materials at least of architecture, introduced any change or improvement. Stone structures were still unknown; and the forest of oak which, from old heathen associations, had suggested the site of the church, furnished also the rude material of which it was constructed. In some few instances these wooden edifices were encircled by an inclosure of stone, called a *casial*, like that which Bede describes as surrounding a chapel erected on Holy Island by St. Cuthbert. The first churches, indeed, of Northumbria were all constructed of wood; and that of St. Finan, the Irish bishop, at Lindisfarn, was, as we are told, built after 'the fashion of his country, not of stone, but of split oak, and covered with reeds.'

When such was the rude simplicity of their ecclesiastical architecture, it may be concluded that their dwellings were still more homely and frail; and in this, as in most of the other arts of life, their slow progress may be ascribed mainly to their civil institutions. Where possessions were all temporary, the natural motive to build durably was wanting. Instead of being brought together, too, in cities, where emulation and mutual interchange of mind would have been sure to lead to improvement, the separate clans of the Irish sat down, each in its hereditary canton, seldom meeting but in the field, as fellow-combatants, or as foes. In this respect, the religious zeal which now universally prevailed supplied, in some degree, the place of industry and commerce; and, among the many civilizing effects

the strings; and no harp hath the sound so melting and prolonged as the Irish harp."—*Sylv. Sylvar.* See also Selden's Notes on Drayton's Polyolbion.

The following is from Evelyn's Journal:—"Came to see my old acquaintance, and the most incomparable player on the Irish harp, Mr. Clarke, after his travels. . . . Such music before or since did I never hear, that instrument being neglected for its extraordinary difficulty; but in my judgment far superior to the lute itself, or whatever speaks with strings."

* According to O'Halloran and Dr. O'Connor, the name Benn-Choir signifies Sweet Choir.

† See, on this subject, Lanigan, chap. xxvi. note 46.

of the monastic institutions, it was not the least useful that, wherever established, they were the means of attracting multitudes around them, and, by examples of charity and self-denial, inspiring them with better motives than those of clanship for mutual dependence and concert. The community collected, by degrees, around the Oak of St. Brigid, at Kildare, grew at length into a large and flourishing town; and even the solitary cell of St. Kevin, among the mountains, drew around it, by degrees, such a multitude of dwellings as, in the course of time, to form a holy city in the wilderness.

With regard to our evidence of the state of agriculture, at this period, the language employed, on such subjects, in the Lives of the Saints, our only sources of information, is too vague and general to afford any certain knowledge. The tending of sheep was, as we have seen, the task assigned to St. Patrick during his servitude; and it is, indeed, most probable that pasturage was then, as it continued for many centuries after, the chief employment of the people.* The memorable 'Earn,' however, of the apostle's friend Dicho, implies obviously the practice of hoarding grain; and from an account given, in the annals for the year 650, of a murder which took place in 'the bakehouse of a mill,' it would appear that water-mills† had already been brought into use at that time.‡ There is, indeed, mention made, in one of the Brehon Laws,§ though of what period seems uncertain, both of carpenters and millwrights.

Another of these Irish Laws, said to be of great antiquity, shows that the practice of irrigating lands must have been in use when it was enacted: as it thus regulates the common right in the water:— 'According to the Fenechas, the common right of drawn water belongs to the land from which it is drawn. It is therefore that all require that it shall run freely the first day over the entire land. For right in the water belongs to none but in the land from which it is drawn.'||

The biographer of St. Columba, besides employing the terms ploughing and sowing, mentions as the result, on one occasion, of the abbot's prayers and intercessions, that they had an abundant harvest. The discipline of the monks, enjoining herbs and pulse, as their chief food, would lead to the culture of such productions in their gardens. The mention of honey-comb, too, as part of the

* It was for this reason that they appeared to Giraldus as not yet in his time emerged from the pastoral life:—"Gens agriculturæ labores aspernans, a primo pastoralis vitæ vivendi modo non recedens." That Spenser held it to be no less a cause than a sign of the want of civilization, appears from the following strong sentences:—"To say truth, though Ireland be by nature accounted a great soil of pasture, yet had I rather have fewer cows kept, and men better mannered, than to have such huge increase of cattle, and no increase of good conditions. I would, therefore, wish that there were some ordinances made amongst them, that whomsoever keepeth twenty kine should keep a plough going; for, otherwise, all men would fall to pasturage, and none to husbandry."—*View of the State of Ireland*.

† Annal. iv. Mag. ad. ann. 647.—See Dr. O'Connor's note on the passage.

‡ The introduction of water-mills into the British Isles is attributed by Whitaker, to the Romans; and from hence, he says, this sort of mill is called *Melin* in the British, and *Muilan* or *Muiland* in the Irish.

§ Collectan. Hibern. No. 1.

|| O'Reilly on the Brehon Laws, Trans. Royal Irish Academy, vol. xiv.

monastic diet, concurs, with some curious early laws on the subject,* to prove their careful attention to the rearing of bees; and not only apple-trees, but even vines, are said to have been cultivated by the inmates of the monasteries.

Of the skill of the workers in various metals at this period, as well as of the lapidaries and painters, we are told wonders by the hagiologists, who expatiate at length on the staff of St. Patrick, covered with gold and precious stones, the tomb of St. Brigid at Kildare, surmounted by crowns of gold and silver, and the walls of the church at the same place, adorned with holy paintings. But it is plain that all this luxury of religious ornament, as well as those richly illuminated manuscripts which Dr. O'Connor and others have described, must all be referred to a somewhat later period.

Of the use of war-chariots among the Irish,† in the same manner as among the Britons and the Greeks, some notice has already been taken; and this sort of vehicle was employed also by the ancient Irish for the ordinary purposes of travelling. The self-devotion of St. Patrick's charioteer has made him memorable in our history; and both St. Brigid and Columba performed their progresses, we are told, in the same sort of carriage. There is also a canon of the synod attributed to St. Patrick, which forbids a monk to travel from one town to another, in the same chariot with a female.

Reference has been made, in the course of this chapter, to the early Brehon Laws, and could we have any dependence on the date assigned to such of these laws as have been published, or even on the correctness of the translations given of them, they would unquestionably be very important documents. Of those published by Valancey it has been pronounced, by a writer not over-credulous,‡ that they bear strong internal marks of antiquity; and while the comment on the several laws is evidently, we are told, the work of some Christian juris-consults, the laws themselves wear every appearance of being of ancient, if not of Pagan times. No mention occurs in them of foreigners, or of foreign septs, in Ireland. The regulations they contain for the barter of goods, and for the payment of fines by cattle and other commodities, mark a period when coin had not yet come into general use; while the more modern date of the Comment, it is said, is manifested by its substituting, for such primitive modes of payment, gold and silver taken by weight. Mention is made in them, also, of the Taltine Games and the Convocation of the States; and it is forbidden, under the pain of an Eric, to imprison any person for debt during these meetings.

* "Whoever plunders or steals bees from out a garden or fort is subject to a like penalty as if he steal them out of a habitation, for these are ordained of equal penalty by law." Again, "Bees in an inclosure, or fort, and in a garden, are of the same account (as to property, penalty, &c.) as the wealth, or substance of a habitation." Extracted from inedited Brehon Laws, in an Essay on the Rise and Progress of Gardening in Ireland, by J. C. Walker. See Antholog. Hibern. vol. i., and Trans. Royal Acad. vol. iv.

† The king of the Irish Crutheni, or Picts, is described by Adamnan as escaping from the field of battle in a chariot:—"Quemadmodum victus currui insidens evaserit."

‡ Leland, Hist. of Ireland, Preliminary Discourse.

With the single exception, perhaps, of the absence of any allusion to foreigners, there is not one of these alleged marks of antiquity that would not suit equally well with the state and condition of Ireland down to a period later, by many centuries, than that at which we are arrived; the payment by cattle and the law of the Eric having been retained, as we shall find, to a comparatively recent date.

With respect to the manner in which the Irish laws were delivered down, whether in writing or by tradition, there has been much difference of opinion; and the poet Spenser, in general well informed on Irish subjects, declares the Brehon law to be 'a rule of right unwritten.' Sir John Davies, too, asserts that 'its rules were learned rather by tradition than by reading.' This is evidently, however, an erroneous representation. Without referring to the Collections of Judgments, or Codes of Laws, which are said to have been compiled under some of the heathen princes, we find, after the introduction of Christianity, the Great Code, or Seanchas-More, as it was called, drawn up with the aid, according to some writers, of St. Patrick, but supposed by others to have been of a much later date.

In the seventh century, a body of the laws of the country was compiled and digested, we are told, from the scattered writings of former lawyers, by three learned brothers, the sons of O'Burechan, of whom one was a judge, the second a bishop, and the third a poet.* The great number, indeed, of Irish manuscripts still extant, on the subject of the Brehon Laws, sufficiently refutes the assertion of Spenser and others, that these laws were delivered down by tradition alone. In the very instance, mentioned by Sir John Davies, of the aged Brehon whom he met with in Fermanagh, the information given reluctantly by this old man, respecting a point of local law, was gained by reference to an ancient parchment roll, 'written in fair Irish character,' which the Brehon carried about with him always in his bosom.† The truth appears to be, that both tradition and writing were employed concurrently in preserving these laws; the practice of oral delivery being still retained after the art of writing them down was known; and a custom which tended much to perpetuate this mode of tradition, was the duty imposed upon every Filea or Royal Poet, to learn by heart the Brehon Law, in order to be able to assist the memory of the judge.‡

On the whole, whatever may be thought of the claims to a high antiquity of the numerous remains of the Brehon Law that have come down to us, of the immemorial practice of this form of jurisprudence among the ancient Irish, and of the fond, obstinate reverence with which, long after they had passed under the English yoke, they still continued to cling to it, there exists not the slightest doubt.

* Ware's Writers, chap. iv.

† Letter to the Earl of Salisbury, Collectan. vol. i.

‡ "In order to qualify the File," says Mr. O'Reilly, "for this important office, the rules for the education of the poetic professors required that every *Dos*, or poet of the third degree, before he was qualified to become a *Cana*, or poet of the fourth degree, should repeat, in the presence of the king and the nobles, the *Breithe Neimhidh*, i. e. the Law of the Degrees or Ranks, and fifty poems of his own composition."—*Essay on the Brehon Laws*.

In the fifth century, the Brehons were found by St. Patrick dispensing their then ancient laws upon the hills ; and, more than a thousand years after, the law-officers of Britain found in the still revered Brehon the most formidable obstacle to their plans.”

CHAPTER LIX.

Accession of Connor to the Throne.—Ravages of the Danes.—Reign of Nial III.—Invasion of Turgesius.—Devastations and Calamities experienced by Munster and Leinster.—The Danes endeavour to subjugate all Ireland to their dominion.—The death of Nial, and the accession of Malachy I.—Meeting of the National Estates. Continued success of the Danes.

To Hugh, the last monarch, succeeded prince Connor, son to king Donachad, on the throne of Ireland. Immediately after his coronation he raised an army to oppose the Danes, who had, at this era, carried their incursions and devastations over the principal parts of Leinster and Connaught. At Tailtean, in Meath, a battle was fought, in which the king was victorious. After this defeat, the Danes retreated to the neighbourhood of Wexford, where prince Lorcan, son of Ceallach, king of Leinster, attacked them, A. D. 824, at a place called Drum-Conla,—but the Danes obtained there a dear-bought victory. In the year 826, another body of these barbarians landed near the present city of Cork, which they captured, and after plundering the church of St. Finbar, they set the whole town on fire.

“A greater number of Danes,” says McDermott, “landed near Newry,* in 830, and plundered the churches and university of Armagh of an immense quantity of plate and riches. They polluted, once more, with sacrilegious hands, the monastery of Benchoir, and committed dreadful ravages in Connaught. Connor, unable to re-

* NEWRY, situated partly in the counties of Down and Armagh, on the banks of a river called the *Newrywater*, at the distance of sixty-three English miles from Dublin, is a large and populous town, eminent for its commerce and wealth. Its contiguity to the sea at Warrenpoint, and its communication, on the opposite side, by canal, with the spacious bay of Carlingford, only six miles distant, have rendered it the great commercial emporium of the southern counties of Ulster. The population of Newry, according to a census taken in 1833, amounted to 14,353 souls. It is irregularly built, but some of its public and private edifices display architectural taste and magnificence of a high order. The Protestant church, erected in the year 1819, is an excellent specimen of Gothic architecture. There are three Roman Catholic chapels in Newry ; one is situated in Bow St., one in Chapel St., and one recently erected, which a late Tourist describes thus :—“ The Catholic church, which stands on the low ground, is constructed of hewn granite, in the pointed or Gothic style, and consists of a nave and side aisles, the western end constituting the principal front. This facade may be described as having a centre, and two wings, apparently divided by two handsome octagonal turrets, which are carried to a considerable height, the upper stages terminating in open lanterns of perforated panel work and battlements. The length of the edifice, taken over the walls, is upwards of 120 feet, by 74 in breadth.” Of Newry we will have occasion to speak more largely, in a future note. 23d March, 1836.

pel attacks, so suddenly made, and so remotely felt, is said to have died with grief.

Nial III., his successor, was crowned A. D. 836; he was son to Aodh VI., and had to contend with Turgesius, the most formidable of all the Danish commanders. O'Halloran places his arrival in 836, but other writers 20 years earlier. He approached Ireland with a formidable fleet of 120 ships, 50 of which he sent northward to Drogheda, and with the remainder he landed in Dublin. The glad tidings of this powerful and able commander soon reached the vagabond Danes who ranged the country in all directions; and though composed of different nations, they all immediately flocked to his standard; certain, if not of totally subduing the country, at least of carrying off an immense booty to their respective homes.

The state of Munster at this time, and the proceedings of Turgesius, are thus described by Dr. O'Halloran:—

‘Already had Munster suffered unheard of afflictions: the Northern and Southern Momonians, or the Eogonachts and Dalgais, had not been well united; these last, constantly in arms to defend their frontiers from the Connacians, could not enforce their right of alternate succession to the crown of Munster; and were in a manner excluded by the Eogonachts; and the writer of the actions of Ceallach Caisil, now before me, complains, that in all the miseries of these days, the monarchs never afforded them the smallest succour. Thus divided amongst themselves, and unsupported by the other provinces, the Danes, wherever they landed, had nothing to fear but from the military and people of that quarter only. Their fleet, a second time, sailed up the Shannon, and destroyed a most spacious monastery near Carrig-a-Foile, the remains of which, at this day, proclaim, in part, its former extent and grandeur; all the other religious houses, on both sides the river, suffered the same fate. They landed a considerable body of troops near Limerick, surprised and set on fire the ancient city of Descain-Assain, and with it the noble college of Muingharid, with the monastery and other religious houses, having first plundered them of their richest effects. Soon after this they possessed themselves of Limerick. We are not told how, nor the exact time, but the Ulster annals under the year 843 mention St. Ferranan's being taken prisoner at Cluan-Chomharda, and with his family and the ornaments and relics of his churches, conveyed by water to their fleet at Limerick. From this we must suppose them in possession of it before that period. And here let me, for once, observe, *en passant*, the manifest absurdities of foreign writers asserting that Limerick, Cork, Waterford, and most of our sea-port towns were built by these merciless barbarians. Limerick was so noted for its commerce from the earliest ages, that it was never mentioned by our earliest writers without the epithet *long* annexed to it. When Ceallach Caisil attacked and expelled the Danes from thence, we then find him call it *Liumneach na Luingas*, or Limerick of the ships or fleets.’

The Momonians must have received some considerable checks in this last invasion, because I find it mentioned, that after Ailghenan, king of Caisil's decease (and he ruled Munster but seven years),

Maolgula, who was his successor, was killed in battle by the Loch-Lannachs.

Turgesius, as we see, having now the command of these aliens, wherever dispersed through the kingdom, with great wisdom availed himself of this power, and his different detached parties were everywhere in action, while he possessed himself of Drogheda, and another part of Dublin; and now was the whole country one scene of ruin and desolation—churches and monasteries, religious and laics, nobles and peasants, without discrimination, suffered the utmost cruelty of sword and fire. Maigh-Breagh and Maigh-Liffe, which before this exhibited such scenes of opulence, splendour, hospitality, and piety, became now destitute of inhabitants, cities, or houses; and the country, instead of being covered with flocks and corn, was replete with barbarians, who were a dishonour to humanity. In this general conflagration and carnage, churches of the greatest fame were particular objects to satiate the vengeance and rapacity of these infidels. They plundered and burned the noble abbey and churches of Kildare, taking with them the rich shrines of St. Bridgid and St. Conlath. The city of Fearn-Maida, or Ferns, then the capital of Leinster, they laid in ashes, having first plundered the archiepiscopal church of St. Maida of all its riches. They erected forts and castles in these now desolate places; so that whoever ventured to return to their old habitations, must do it on terms of submission to them. In vain did the Irish oppose them manfully every where, and wherever they engaged them, in general defeated them. Our annals are minute enough in their accounts of these different encounters (for battles they could not be called), and note in what place three, in another five, and six hundred of these people were cut off. It is evident by their numbers, and the power they in fact acquired, that, upon the whole, the Danes were successful. This was not enough, the interior parts of the country had been hitherto freed from their incursions, and poured forth new men to defend those parts nearest them. Turgesius, in imitation of the Irish, having penetrated far into the country, caused light barks to be built, and the interior and other parts of the Shannon and other rivers and lakes, were soon filled with enemies, who, by sudden landings, laid the country every where waste. The prospect of a complete reduction of the country animated these people to make new efforts. Turgesius sent to his friends for a fresh reinforcement of troops. Early in 839 a fleet of Danish ships appeared on the coast of Ulster, and landed a large body of troops near Dundalk, and after laying waste the country, took Armagh, sword in hand, and set fire to all its sumptuous churches, colleges, and public edifices. As had been already done in the south, they built vessels, and Loch Neach and Loch Erne were covered with small craft, from which they suddenly landed, spreading ruin and desolation over all the adjacent country, and particularly destroying churches and monasteries.

Such is the melancholy picture given to us of these dismal times. The historian by whom it is drawn, obliged to avow the ultimate success of the Danes, but anxious to preserve the military character of his country, says, ‘the Irish opposed them manfully every where,

and wherever they engaged them, in general defeated them ;' but common sense revolts at the idea of a people generally defeated, and yet finally triumphant. The truth appears to be, that in all the lesser rencounters that took place between the Danes and Irish, the latter were generally, if not always defeated. The former were always the aggressors, and acted on the offensive, the latter, who were almost always attacked unawares, acted on the defensive, and being unprepared for contest, had little chance with an enemy, who, while they remained in the island, made war their trade, and pillage the object of their ill-directed ambition. Whenever the political feuds of the Irish princes suffered them to unite against the common enemy—whenever a vigorous effort was made to bring the Irish to a general engagement, the Danes seldom escaped with impunity, and were generally defeated. But the victory was scarcely obtained, when the evil genius of Ireland set them again by the ears, and gave the enemy an opportunity of recruiting their forces."

In the year 840, Turgesius, son of the King of Denmark, entered the river Boyne, near Drogheda,* with fifty ships, and effected a landing without opposition. No sooner had this daring and despotic chief captured Drogheda, than he marched to the city of Dublin, which he speedily caused to surrender. After placing a garrison in Dublin, he made an incursion into Ulster, where he burned and plundered several churches and abbeys. At Armagh, St. Ferranan, the Archbishop, at the head of all the forces he could collect, bravely opposed Turgesius; but in vain, for the Primate was taken a prisoner by the tyrant. The booty which the Danes carried from the Cathedral of Armagh, was immense. All the foreigners throughout Ireland now acknowledged Turgesius as their chief, under whose potent command they promised to themselves the subjugation of the entire Island, and a rich harvest of plunder. The monarch Nial made, at that juncture, a journey into Ulster, in the hope of being able to raise forces to expel the invaders from his kingdom. He defeated the Danes in two battles, but he was unfortunately drowned in the river Callen, in the county of Armagh, while making the generous attempt of saving the life of his equery, who had fallen into the flood.

"If," writes Dr. Warner, "this monarch gave no proof in his life of his zeal and activity to serve his country, he left a signal instance of humanity at his death; and this makes it probable that it was not so much his fault as the fault of the times; and owing to some untoward conjunctures, that he did not exert himself sooner against the common enemy."

The conclusion of this chapter is from McDermott's history of Ireland.

"The death of Nial would have been succeeded by the pomp and

* The river BOYNE rises from a mountain near Clanbullage, in the King's county, and in its progress to the sea, into which it falls in the vicinity of Drogheda, it passes through the counties of Kildare, East and West Meath. This fine river is navigable for large ships to the harbour of Drogheda. At Navan, in the county of Meath, the river Blackwater, which derives its source from the county of Cavan, mingles its tributary streams with the Boyne.

ceremony of an election, if the distresses of the nation had permitted. But from the absence of this ceremony, the chronicles of the time do not mention who succeeded to the throne. Malachy, nephew to the monarch Connor, and son of Maolruana, is, however, placed next in the regal list, but though it is likely that he was the only sovereign acknowledged by the Irish, yet his title was merely nominal. Some there are who assert that Turgesius immediately usurped the crown, being proclaimed king by his countrymen, to whom the Irish submitted, but be this as it may, certain it is, that if unlimited power can confer royalty, Turgesius was monarch, even though the pomp of a coronation had been never thought of. The Irish, however, recognized his title no farther than necessity compelled them; and Malachy was the sovereign of their hearts. In the regal list he is entitled *Flaith na Feine go Fíor Buadh*—prince of the truly victorious legion. He summoned the estates of Connaught, Meath, and Ulster, to meet him at Armagh, which had been lately recovered from the Danes, to deliberate on the most effectual means of expelling the common enemy out of the country, and redeeming the disgraced military character. What the resolutions were that passed in this assembly we are not informed, and can only guess at them from the subsequent events which followed. Several victories were obtained over the Danes in different parts of the island, but they were victories of partial import, when compared to the great losses which they sustained. Malachy defeated them in Meath, and left 700 of them slain on the field of battle. They were also defeated at *Ardbraccan*,* by the Dalgais, and at Easruadh by the inhabitants of Tirconnell. They were equally unsuccessful in some other engagements; but these losses were too inconsiderable to make any impression on the operations of the Danes. In the battle of Glas-Glean, however, they met with an unexpected check: 1700 of their men, with Saxolb, one of their most distinguished generals, were slain on the field of battle, and their entire army routed by Malachy in conjunction with the Lagenians. The Danes, however, fertile in resources, and continually increased by auxiliary troops from Britain and France, countries in which their arms were marked with the same success that attended them in Ireland, were scarcely sensible of those partial losses, and Turgesius soon became so absolute in Ireland, that he reduced the people to the most cruel bondage, which the genius of invention and cruelty could devise.

I know not how to give the reader a clearer view of the state of Ireland, under the administration of Turgesius, than by presenting to him an outline of the bondage, and the particulars of the cruelties and privations to which the Irish were subjected by these inexorable barbarians, as it is accurately and minutely described by Dr. Warner:

‘They (the Irish) were forced by droves,’ says he, ‘like sheep

* ARDBRACCAN, where stands the elegant palace of the Bishop of Meath, is about two miles distant from the opulent town of Navan, in a westerly direction,—and twenty-nine miles N. W. from Dublin. It derives its name from *St. Braccan*, who founded an abbey in that place, A. D. 650. The Protestant church of Ardbraccan, which was built in 1766, is more massy than magnificent. The interior is, however, elaborately decorated with episcopal emblems and attributes.

into captivity, and such as escaped, were obliged to retire into the woods and wildernesses with their families, and lie exposed to the miseries of want and nakedness, in order to preserve themselves from slavery. The sea coasts were ravaged in the same manner by sending different parties round the island in their boats; and no words can paint out the various species of misery which the poor inhabitants underwent. The cruelties of fire and sword, of rape and plunder, of violence and captivity, were all united under the usurpation of Turgesius. A government established in this manner must necessarily overturn the laws and religion as well as the rights and liberties of the nation; the only rule of administration being the usurper's will, and that usurper being a pagan and a tyrant. This was, in fact, the case at that time in Ireland. The churches and monasteries were desolated and consumed; the laws were a dead letter; and all religion and learning were suppressed or banished the island.

The more warlike the spirit of the Irish was, the more enthusiastic their attachment to the Milesian line of kings, and the more jealous they were of their liberties, the more their necks must be galled with the oppressive yoke of this usurper. But even all this could not bring them to a spirit of union among themselves; and faction which is always the disease of liberty, proved mortal now, and occasioned its death. Particular princes, it is true, spirited up their tribes, and fought many times with great success against the oppressors—but these engagements were not the fruit of united counsel, in concert with each other, and were therefore more properly skirmishes and rencounters than general actions in defence of the common cause, and for the extirpation of their enemies, and the event was answerable; for notwithstanding these victorious battles over the Danes, the usurper still possessed the government, and the fate of the country remained undecided. The loss of these troops, continually supplied with fresh recruits from Norway, which were poured upon them in great numbers; whilst the natives were diminishing, even with their successes. The Irish being at length dispirited and worn out, were obliged to yield themselves vanquished, and to submit to the tyranny of their Danish masters, who ruled them indeed with a rod of iron, and made them taste of the very dregs of servitude.

Turgesius having brought the whole island into subjection, he made it his next business to new model the state, in order to secure himself in the government which he had obtained by force. Thus into every barony he put a Danish king where before there had been an Irish one. For what we call lords of the manor in our days, they called kings. Into every district or parish was placed a captain of war; every ville had a sergeant, and every house a soldier. The bishops and clergy were, for the most part, retreated into bogs and wildernesses, into woods or subterraneous caves, where they preserved their historical monuments, and where they hid and lurked about like wild beasts; their country was no longer the island of saints, nor the mart of literature to the rest of Europe. The men of learning had taken themselves away to seek repose in

other countries, as we may learn from a letter to the emperor Charles the Bald, who gave them a kind reception.

When the city of Armagh was sacked, all the clergy, the religious and the students of that university, were made prisoners by Turgesius, and shipped off for Limerick, then in the hands of the Danes, and what was their fate afterwards was not known. In every church or monastery that was not reduced to ashes, and near the ruins of those that were, a lay Danish abbot had his residence in order to collect the revenues with which they were endowed. All the books that could be met with they burned or tore to pieces—the schools or seminaries of learning were shut up or destroyed; and the inhabitants were not permitted to teach their children to read. Every bride was obliged to be the first night after her marriage with the Danish captain of the territory in which she lived—but if she was not to his taste, he had a certain tax in money in lieu of her virginity.

These are only the outlines of that cruel bondage which the Irish were held in by their lords the Danes. The particulars are still more shocking and insupportable. It has been already taken notice of that a soldier was quartered in every house and cottage throughout the kingdom, but the reader has no idea of the miseries entailed upon every family by that regulation. Here he was not only a spy upon every action, every word, and every look, but the soldier was also the absolute master of the house, and of every person in it. Not a chicken could be killed, not an egg, nor a little milk used for any one till he was first satisfied, and his leave obtained; and if he had a mind to lie with the wife or daughter, he must not be denied, lest his resentment should dispossess them of all they had. Neither the cries of the infant, nor the want of the diseased which required milk were in the least regarded by this brute; and he would often times devour it wantonly to create the greater distress and to enhance his inhumanity. Many of the Irish at first refused to comply with these oppressions; but then the soldiers of the neighbouring houses joining together, they were dragged by violence to the guard, which they kept in every county, and there imprisoned and cruelly used till they had made satisfaction to their guests, whom they had offended by their disobedience.

None of the gentry or nobility were allowed to wear any clothes but what the Danes had first worn out and lain aside: the young ladies were not permitted to work at all with the needle; and the sons of the Irish chiefs were prohibited the use of arms, or to exercise themselves in feats of antiquity, or in martial sports, lest they should be qualified and tempted to shake off the yoke of slavery, now about their necks. Every master of a family throughout the island was obliged to pay an annual tribute to the government of an ounce of gold, and if he was remiss in the payment, whether, through utter inability or not, he was punished with the loss of his nose, which occasioned it to be called by the name of the nose tax. In short, all the natives of every rank were prohibited, under the penalty of the severest fines and imprisonment, to make any public entertainments, or to use hospitality among each other, in order to prevent any caballing or contriving against the government, for the restoration of their liberties.

Such and so dreadful was the bondage in which the Irish were held by these barbarians, but yet nothing could bring them to a union among themselves. This is a conduct so utterly incapable of any excuse, that if one might interpret the dark ways of Heaven, and to judge of things so far above our reach, one would think that the miseries which fell upon this people, through the savage cruelty of the Danes, were dealt out by Providence as a just return for those evils which their everlasting contentions brought upon one another. Be this, however, as it might, the excess of tyranny practised by Turgesius, at length roused some of them from their desperation; and by the event it was very evident that it was not owing to the superior power, or skill, or valour of these foreigners, that they trampled thus over the rights and liberties of the Irish, but to their own spirit of discord; and that they rather chose to suffer themselves, than that those whom they hated should not be miserable.' ”

CHAPTER LX.

The violent, arrogant, and despotic conduct of Turgesius.—He claims Malachy's Daughter, the Princess Melcha, for his Mistress.—King Malachy, by a course of admirable policy, and an ingeniously planned stratagem, defeats the criminal purpose of the licentious despot.—Turgesius and his adherents ensnared.—His merited punishment and fate.—The expulsion of the Danes from Ireland, and the restoration of the Irish Monarchy.—The Danes succeed in a second invasion of Ireland. Dissensions amongst the Irish Princes.—A union of friendship and defence is effected by the Priest Eagna, between the disputing Irish chieftains.—A meeting of the States convened by King Malachy.—The Danes are vanquished in battle by the Monarch.—Malachy's death, and the accession of Hugh VI. to the throne.—The Danes, commanded by Amelanus, attack the Irish, and gain a victory over them. A conflict in Ulster, where the Danes are defeated.—Amelanus, with his forces, surprises the Irish as they are returning from a victorious battle.—Death of the Monarch Hugh VI.

DANISH tyranny and power had now, in A. D. 849, reached a fearful force of preponderance in Ireland. The unfortunate Irish had to succumb, like slaves, under the iron rods of their oppressors. Law and justice were no longer respected at that period in Ireland; and compassion became deaf to the wailings of complaint. The flagrant and wicked presumption and arrogance of Turgesius, were of the most barbarous and insolent character, as the following extract from McDERMOTT, will amply testify :

“The Danish usurper, Turgesius, had a palace built for himself, in the same fort where Malachy, the king of Meath, and the legitimate Irish monarch resided. Though he arrogated supreme sway, yet he frequently condescended to visit his brother king, who, through policy, was obliged to entertain the Dane, whenever he thought proper to become his guest. During these repeated entertainments, the unwelcome visitant became acquainted with the person of one of King Malachy's daughters, who was exceedingly handsome, and in a compulsory manner he demanded the fair for his pleasure. The royal father endeavoured to amuse the Danish chief by assuring

him that there were several young ladies in his family or neighbourhood, who far surpassed his daughter in beauty, and from whom, he was certain, he would derive much greater satisfaction. The arrogant Dane, whose passions had hitherto been strangers to any refusal, and whose desire for this princess became exceedingly violent, declared his inflexible determination to take away the lady by force, and make her subservient to his lascivious will.

Though stung to the heart at the infamous resolution of the tyrant, Malachy, with consummate policy, disguised his indignation and resentment; he smothered his parental feelings, and artfully appeared delighted with the usurper's infamous design. Instead of an affront, he seemed to take it as an honour, and it induced the haughty Dane to believe, that for the sake of insuring his friendship and interest, he would with readiness and pleasure sacrifice a lovely daughter to his lewd embraces. Though dissimulation is not the characteristic of the Irish, particularly in provocations of this kind, yet Malachy might have had good reasons for practising the present evasion. In all probability Turgesius was well armed and attended during his visits, and the monarch would in vain have attempted to revenge the foul infamy which his heart abhorred. He therefore waited a better opportunity to frustrate the base intention of Turgesius,

——— in rege tamen pater est.

and amused the tyrant with an artful proposal: he held forth that as love and beauty seemed to be his chief delight, he was willing to gratify his inclinations to the utmost; and if it met with his approbation he would positively send his daughter to his palace, at a certain hour the next evening, accompanied with fifteen other blooming virgins, all of whom should far surpass the princess in external beauty. He advised Turgesius to invite some of his most skilful lords to be present at the time, and when the ladies were all before him, that he should then take their advice, and make his choice. If the princess proved the most agreeable, the father declared she was not too good to be at his service; but if fascinated by any of the other ladies, he then trusted to his *honour* for the restoration of his daughter.

The projects which Malachy adopted for the punishment of the audacious tyrant, and for the preservation of his daughter's virtue, is so exceedingly romantic that we shall give it in Dr. Warner's words; who has recorded it on the authorities of Keating, Usher, Sir James Ware, &c. &c.

'The lascivious Dane was not only satisfied, but extremely delighted with the proposal, and was lavish in his thanks and praises to Malachy for the contrivance. He was then going to Dublin, to a convention of his chiefs upon affairs of state; in order still further to defeat the hopes of the natives, to defend the country from other invaders, and to perpetuate the succession to the government of the island among themselves. As soon as the business was finished, and the council had been entertained, the usurper selected fifteen of the company who were his greatest favourites, to whom he communicated this intrigue; and to whom he promised to sacrifice a beau-

tiful young virgin, if they would go with him to his palace. The proposal was not made with greater pleasure than it was accepted; and they all repaired to the court of Turgesius with great impatience. The mind of Malachy, though for very different reasons, was not less at rest. Nothing was further from his intention, than the delivering up his daughter, who was indeed extremely beautiful, to gratify the lust of this libidinous Dane; and yet he knew that his own life must not only pay the forfeit of his refusal, but that his daughter must also be the prey of his brutal appetite. What did he do therefore in this dilemma, but resolve upon an attempt, which, if it miscarried, should leave them in no worse situation than they were in before; and if it succeeded, as he had great reason to hope it would, must rid him (them) for ever of this savage tyrant, whom it would sacrifice to the violence of his own lust.

Accordingly he got together fifteen of the most lovely fair young men in his territories, on whose spirit and resolution he could depend, and after communicating the secret of his purpose to them, and taking their engagement to execute it to his wish, they were all attired like young ladies, and every one armed with a short sharp sword under their (his) robe. He then instructed them in the part they were to act, and assured them that he would follow with his guard at a little distance, to second and support them in what should remain to be done. Thus accoutred and disciplined, the princess and her companions went at the hour appointed to the Danish palace; where they were no sooner arrived than they were conducted to the apartment, where the monarch and his associates were waiting to receive them. In order to disgust the ladies as little as possible with their appearance, all their arms were left below; and their outward air of complacency and satisfaction kept equal pace with the inward pleasure that employed their minds.

But the princess and her retinue were inspired with a love of another kind, a love of liberty and their country; which they were resolved to redeem, or to perish in the attempt. Thus the one side thought of nothing but excessive dalliance and indulgence of desire, and the other was prepared for assassination. Accordingly when Turgesius had compared the princess with her train, and embraced her as a token of the choice he made, they, one and all, drew their swords at the same instant, and put every one of the Danes to death, except the tyrant himself, who, according to their instructions, was bound with cords they had brought concealed for that purpose. The signal was then given out of the window, as it had been agreed upon, to Malachy and his guards, who broke into the fort sword in hand, and giving no quarter, the officers and soldiers fell promiscuously in the carnage, and not one escaped to tell their fate. The revenge of the Irish being thus fully satiated for the present, Malachy made it his first business to seek out and triumph over the usurper. Having upbraided him with a short narration of his monstrous cruelties, his many rapes and murders, and a general state of his oppression and tyranny, he ordered him to be heavy loaded with irons and to be dragged along in his procession to grace the victory.'

We are not informed what part the princess took in this sudden

assassination ; but, judging from that extreme modesty, for which the Irish ladies have long been celebrated, it may be presumed that as soon as she had liberated herself from the detested embrace of the Danish libertine, she, it was, who gave, or assisted in giving, the signal to her royal father and protector, and that she withdrew, as soon as possible, from the scene of blood and carnage. Dr. Warner's narrative is thus continued :

‘No sooner was this success over the Danes made known out of the fort, but it spread like fire over the island ; and the news could not be quicker than was the resolution of the Irish, to throw off the yoke which had so long enslaved them. As soon as the Danes understood that their king was taken prisoner, the principal nobility slaughtered, no quarter any where given, and themselves without a leader, they became in turn dispirited ; and as though the genius of Turgesius had been the charm that exalted his own countrymen, and depressed the Irish, no sooner was it broken by his imprisonment, than the Danes lost all their courage ; and the natives, like men awakened out of a dream of slavery, were amazed to find themselves the conquerors. Such of the Danish invaders as lived near the coasts, betook themselves to their shipping with all possible expedition, and left the island. But those who had possessed themselves of the inland country, were obliged to retreat into their cities and fortified places to secure themselves by their numbers. This retreat, however, availed them nothing. The Irish had now recovered their pristine spirit ; and as though it had acquired strength from lying dormant, it every where burst out with a double fury. The towns and forts where the Danes had taken shelter, were assaulted and stormed with rage rather than valour ; the woods and wildernesses in which others had concealed themselves when the Irish quitted them, were cleared of their new inhabitants with an unrelenting vengeance ; no solitude nor flight was able to protect them from an enemy whom they had enraged with their violent treatment : in short, the Irish were determined to make use of this opportunity, to extirpate these barbarians at once out of the land, to complete the revolution, and to establish their government upon its ancient footing.

When the usurper had been kept some time in fetters, in order to punish his haughty spirit, and to make him a witness to the miseries of his countrymen, he was drawn to Lough Leana,* by the command

* LOUGH LEANA, on one of the islands of which Turgesius erected a lofty tumulus of earthen work, is a small, but beautiful lake, situated near the sylvan village of Fore, in the county of West Meath. It is studded with three shrub-shrouded islands of the most picturesque and romantic scenery. Nothing can exceed, in landscape charm, the country that environs this limpid lake, which is margined by a range of pastoral hills, clothed in wood. The pretty town of Castle-Pollard, with its outstretched gardens, and the mansion and domain of Pakenham Hall, mingling and contrasting architectural grandeur, with sublime scenery, tend to give an Italian character to the imposing landscape which is spread around the Lake of Leana.

On the subject of Turgesius's lawless love for King Malachy's daughter, the author of this History has written a drama, entitled "*Ireland Redeemed, or the Devoted Princess*," which was performed several times in the New York and Philadelphia Theatres.

of Malachy, amidst thousands of spectators exulting in his fate, and bound as he was, thrown in and drowned. Thus ended the life of the accursed tyrant Turgesius, after perpetrating a series of cruelties for many years abhorrent to our nature; leaving an example to the world, how miserable and unexpected their fate often is, who, consulting nothing but their interest and the gratifications of their passions, think by cunning or violence to establish themselves in their power and greatness. The small remainder of the Danes who could neither save themselves by flight nor by their valour, were reduced to the necessity of begging quarter, and of promising to become obedient and useful servants to the Irish; and the peace of the country being now secured, and the fury of the inhabitants in a great measure abated by the execution of the usurper, and by the slaughter or the flight of the greatest part of his men, these few were received to mercy, and being disarmed, their lives were spared.'

No longer the *nominal*, but *acknowledged* monarch of Ireland, Malachy now took the reins of government into his own hands. Had it not been for the affront offered to his honour, by the proposed pollution of a beloved daughter, he would probably have terminated an insignificant reign in abject submission to an unprincipled despot, and the subjection of his unhappy subjects might have continued for many years, as by increasing numbers, the enemy would have become more and more formidable. But from evil, good often springs. Even from a slavery of thirteen years, the Irish derived a salutary lesson—they learned from the Danes, who were well acquainted with trade, the advantages of traffic; they perceived that the cultivation of commerce was productive of ease and tranquillity to the community, and even tended to promote the domestic comforts of mutual love and friendship. Hence they began to relish a life of quietude, to see the folly of their former state of turbulence, and to be convinced that public concord was the best security of the public weal.

Malachy having assembled the states of the kingdom, resettled the constitution upon its ancient footing. In this convention the provincial kings, the princes and lords were restored to their jurisdiction, and though they could not recover all their treasures of gold and silver, and jewels, the spoils of many foreign princes brought home to Ireland through many hundred years by their predecessors, yet every private person was restored to his land and cattle, and the state recovered its civil policy.

Instead of profiting by the hardships which they had experienced, and of employing their time and strength to their own glory, and to the public good, by fitting out ships, extending their commerce with foreign nations, and in securing their country by fleets and fortifications against all invaders, this infatuated people remained in a state of inactivity and indolence. They never repaired the Danish fortifications which, in their battles with the enemy, they had demolished, or wisely planned the erection of new ones on their coasts; but devoted their time to unprofitable amusements. Instead of taking the trouble of even guarding their seaports, which were their principal defence against invaders, they foolishly employed

their late vanquished enemies to whom they had given a pardon, and who were retained in their pay, to be their sentinels in stations of such great importance.

It is no wonder then that the Danes, who were well acquainted with the wealth and fertility of the island, should avail themselves of this want of security and precaution in the nation. Though they had experienced the valour and martial fortitude of the Irish, they still entertained sanguine hopes of regaining a settlement among them. By stratagem they had been expelled, and they thought, by stratagem, they might again obtain possession. After many consultations among the chiefs to this purpose, it was at last agreed to send a fleet of ships in the way of traffic, with goods and merchandize of various sorts, without any appearance of hostile force or instruments of war; but yet under the conduct of three of their best generals, and with a sufficient number of arms concealed, which might be ready when occasion offered. No sooner was this project concerted than it was immediately put into execution, and the author of the 'Polychronicon' gives the following account of this expedition:

'After the death of Turgesius, the three brothers, Amelanus, Cyracus, and Imorus, went in a peaceable manner from the ports of Norway; and under the pretence of exercising trade and commerce as merchants, they arrived with their followers on the island, and with the consent of the Irish, who had given them up as an inactive people, they occupied the maritime places and built the cities* of Waterford, Dublin and Limerick; but their numbers increasing daily, they often insulted and disturbed the natives.'

The Norwegians, by this device, and under the conduct of these officers in the disguise of merchants, had made the Irish the instruments of their own destruction. They not only obtained settlements in the best parts of the island, but gradually improved them by making fresh acquisitions, till at length they had it in their power to dispute the whole with the natives, and oftentimes to enslave them. This is called the second Danish war by historians; but it was succeeded by other battles more properly entitled to the name of Danish wars. Though the present enemy were continually reinforced through their abundant supplies of men and shipping, they would not have found the subjection of the Irish an easy task, had not the Irish assisted them by their own dissensions. Their natural disposition to feuds and animosities broke out again among themselves, and paved the way for their own misfortunes. The same contests prevailed about the government of a province, a barony or district, as heretofore, and were in the same manner decided by the longest sword. The Norwegians took every advantage of these tumultuary dissensions; and while the petty princes were contending against each other, they seized the opportunity of their being thus weakened, and subduing the victor and the vanquished, obliged each of them to confess their superior authority. Thus they possessed themselves

* As these cities had been built many years before this expedition, the meaning of the above sentence must be, that they were rebuilt out of their ruins, having been burnt or demolished in the first Danish war, as it was called.

of all the seaports, and, undisturbed by the infatuated Irish, carried on, in a great measure, all the foreign trade of the island.

The success of the Norwegians having reached the knowledge of some of their old neighbours, the Danes, the latter renewed their predatory attempts on the weakest parts of the island; they met with little or no opposition from the natives, for the Irish were very indifferent who were their visitors on this occasion; they seemed as willing to have the Danes as the Norwegians, and in all probability they had hopes of deriving some assistance from this union; for we cannot suppose that patriotism and the love of liberty were wholly extinguished. When the Danes began to harass the infant city of Dublin, and the territories adjacent, in which the Norwegians were equally, if not principally concerned, it certainly became the interest of the Norwegians to oppose their progress. A select body of troops was therefore got together with all possible expedition, and having marched against the Danes, the Norwegians offered them battle: the challenge was readily accepted, and a sanguinary contest ensued, the Irish remaining entirely neutral; aware, no doubt, that one party would exterminate the other, and that, by these means, they might be liberated from their adversaries. After a violent struggle, the Danes obtained the victory, the Norwegians having been defeated with the loss of their best forces, and a thousand men left dead on the field. The Danes, encouraged by this success, seized every opportunity of improving their victory: they dispossessed their enemy, the Norwegians, and having driven them from the island, they took both their stations and their treasures. They then turned their arms against the Irish, in order to secure what they had possessed themselves of, as well as to acquire the same authority over the natives, as their predecessors had enjoyed; and as the Irish were unprepared for resistance, it is no wonder that the success of their new enemies was complete. Indeed the Danes had now obtained such a happy settlement in this fertile island, that it was looked upon as a provision for a prince of the house of Denmark, and Amelanus was accordingly appointed to take the command of all his countrymen in Ireland. This royal chief no sooner put himself at their head, than he successively fought the natives who had revolted, and having imposed heavy contributions, the Irish were again reduced to a state of servitude.

Thus oppressed and robbed of their hereditary possessions, the Irish saw the necessity of being united, in order to recover their liberty, and repel the enemy. Notwithstanding this conviction, Eagna, a priest, found it a most difficult task to bring about a union sufficiently strong for this purpose, so great an animosity subsisted at this time between some of the princes of the southern, and the inhabitants of the northern half of the island. Strange indeed that any pains should be necessary to accomplish such a necessary point; and far more strange it may be deemed, that, at such a crisis as this, only one man should be found, who had public spirit enough to recommend and undertake it. The repeated admonitions of Eagna at length prevailed; and a truce having been agreed upon, a summons was issued by King Malachy for a general convention of the

states of the kingdom. It required no long deliberation to prevail upon themselves to follow the advice of Eagna; for they were all truly sensible of it, as already intimated; and it was resolved that the king of Ossory, (who had behaved himself with great petulance and rudeness to the priest, when he was endeavouring to persuade him to this union,*) should not only make a submission to Eagna, who had been so laudably diligent and anxious for the public weal, but that the said king should also, with the son of the king of Munster, conclude a peace with the northern half of the island, that they might all of them be at liberty to unite their forces against the common enemy.

Agreeable to this resolution, but not before the king of Munster had been stoned to death by the Danes, King Malachy having raised a very powerful army, marched against the enemy, and obtained a complete victory over the Danes, particularly those who were quartered in and about Dublin, where the greatest part of them lay slain. The monarch lived but a short time to enjoy the fruits of his victory, and indeed he possessed little or no happiness during his reign. He was, for the first thirteen years, more the slave of Turgesius than the sovereign of a kingdom, and the last three years of his reign had been full of distraction, through the intestine quarrels of his subjects, and the frequent attempts and successes of invaders. This monarch appears to have been a man of equal courage and ability, and had he lived a little longer, in all probability, as the peace of his kingdom was then established, for a time at least, he might have proved as successful against the prince of Denmark, as he had been against Turgesius and his followers. The Irish wanted nothing, it seems, but a union under such a leader, to defeat their enemies; their military genius and powers generally insured success, except when they were unnaturally opposed against each other.

Hugh, or Aodh the 6th, son of Nial the third, who had been king of Temoria, ascended the throne on the death of Malachy, A. D. 863. It is supposed that on the death of Malachy and the accession of Hugh, the union of the kingdom was dissolved, as, in a short time after, a battle took place between the Danes, under the command, it is said, of Amelanus, and a prince of Meath, at the head of a body of Irish, in which the latter were discomfited: this, however, might have been a casual engagement; the Irish might have been surprised in their march, and a combat rendered unavoidable: but whether a rencounter or a battle, it is certain that Amelanus immediately after transported his forces into Scotland; and, according to the fashion of his country, plundered many of the inhabitants there, and having made several of them prisoners, returned with a considerable booty to Ireland.

If, according to supposition, the union of the kingdom had been dissolved on the death of Malachy, it must again have been revived during the reign of King Hugh; as a pitched battle was fought in Ulster between that monarch at the head of a numerous army, and the Danes; in which the latter were completely routed, with the

* Dr. Warner gives this parenthetical remark as a *supposition*; but the resolution which was agreed upon, is a sufficient proof of the *fact*.

loss of twelve hundred slain in the field ; and the heads of forty of their chief officers were brought away in triumph. All the forces on each side seem to have been employed on this occasion, and as the engagement was general, so likewise was the defeat. The Irish, when united, were, as before intimated, always conquerors. Those of the Danish army who had effected their escape, sought refuge in their fortifications ; but were immediately pursued, attacked and beaten, and all the spoils and plunder which they had previously made, now fell into the hands of the Irish. The palace which Amelanus possessed in one of those forts, was set on fire by the natives, and during the confusion which the conflagration occasioned in the garrison, the attack of the Irish was so sudden and violent, that a hundred of the principal Danish officers fell, and very few of the enemy escaped.

In order to revenge on the Irish this general rout of his whole army, Amelanus waited in ambuscade,* for the return of the victors, who, elate with their success, were now marching home in separate bodies. Two thousand of the natives were thus surprised, slaughtered, or taken prisoners. The vindictive Dane then marched, with his remaining forces, to Armagh, and having plundered that city and its environs, with all the fury of an enraged and disappointed enemy, he and his troops hastily repaired to their vessels and quitted the island. Thus the natives were again left to themselves.

After a reign of sixteen years, the monarch Hugh died a natural death : he saw the tranquillity of his country effected by the slaughter and expulsion of her savage enemies ; but did not live long to enjoy the fruits of that tranquillity : indeed some time was required to repair and rebuild the ruined monasteries and demolished churches. Owing to the destruction of those repositories of records, and memoranda of political events, the ecclesiastical history of Ireland affords but little information at this period. The clergy having been despoiled of what was intended for their subsistence, were obliged to quit their sacred function, and arm themselves in defence of their country ; consequently there were few men of learning whose literary labours could be of any worth to posterity ; for the historians who have treated of those calamitous times, have chiefly written from memory or tradition and could not be either satisfactory or correct."

* Though this kind of stratagem in war is censured by Dr. Warner, as derogatory to valour and true fortitude, the most distinguished generals of all nations have occasionally adopted it ; we read that Cyrus, the Persian, by a pretended flight, induced his enemies to pursue him, when they were suddenly surrounded by his divided armies and cut to pieces.

CHAPTER LXI.

The elevation of Flan, the son of King Malachy, to the Irish throne.—Invasion of Munster by the new monarch.—The result of that invasion.—CORMAC MAC-CUILLNAN acts as Prince and Archbishop of Cashel.—His reign and death.—The bravery and devotion of the army of Munster.—Conduct of the Bishop of Inis-Cathy,—he is captured in Leinster, and afterwards succeeds to the crown of Munster.—Death of the monarch Flan, and the succession of Nial IV., the husband of the Princess Melcha, daughter of Malachy.—Renewal of hostilities by the Danes. The death of King Nial, and the accession and reign of Donough.—Ceallach raised to the throne of Munster, and the design of Sitrick, the Danish Prince, to assassinate him, which is frustrated by Sitrick's wife.—Ceallach captured by the Danes.—Great naval fight at Dundalk.

MCDERMOTT'S narrative of the events that will be detailed in this chapter, is so luminous and comprehensive, that we deem it better to quote it than to write it ourself.

“Flan, the son of Malachy, who had been king of Temoria, ascended the throne on the death of Hugh, A. D. 879. No sooner was Flan invested with the sovereign authority, than he raised an army to invade the province of Munster. Historians are silent with respect to the motive which induced the monarch, as soon as he was crowned, to invade one of his own provinces. The publicity of a cause at the time of action, may render it a mystery to future generations; as the annalists of the early ages, who never attended to the minutiae of events, saw no necessity in recording what was then well known. The royal army, which had been raised for this purpose, were, no doubt, acquainted with the provocation, and probably deemed it a just cause of resentment; and yet the cause, if now ascertained, might appear insignificant, such was the spirit of the Irish, whose pride was easily hurt. Whatever might have been the necessity for this attack, the revenge was certainly great. The provincial troops of Munster being either unprepared for resistance, or unwilling to oppose the monarch, submitted to the royal army; who, after they had plundered the inhabitants, made several of them prisoners. Though there were no foreign enemies now to molest the island, domestic dissensions prevailed, and those intestine disturbances were productive of much bloodshed. Donald, one of their chiefs, was treacherously assassinated by some of his pretended friends, and the king of Ulster was murdered, in a most barbarous manner, by his own subjects.

Happily, however, those civil feuds subsided, and peace and tranquillity rendered the island prosperous for some years. The lands were every where cultivated and manured, and yielded a great plenty of crops. The natives began to repair or rebuild the churches, abbeys, and other religious houses: academies and schools were again opened for the education of youth in arts and sciences, as well as in languages, and the blessings of civilization and industry extended all over the country.

At this time the archbishop of Cashel, Cormac Maccuillnan, commonly called the holy Cormac, was in possession of the crown of

Munster, and all the old historians attribute the happiness and prosperity which now prevailed, to the pious care and abilities of this king. Dr. Warner thinks it probable that Flan, the monarch of Ireland, was as much employed in bringing about a reconciliation among the contending parties, 'as he had certainly more authority, and was interested more in a general peace than Cormac,' in whom were united the characters of king and priest; and he therefore conceives that the praises of Cormac had been exaggerated through the partiality of the monkish writers. Though Flan, as monarch of Ireland, had greater sway, Cormac, in his *double* capacity, could probably command greater attention; and it is evident that the former, by his invasion of Munster, and the revenge which he took on the unprepared troops of that province, immediately after the crown was fixed upon his head, was not possessed of a placable, reconciliatory spirit. The old writers seem to infer that the monarch of Ireland had imbibed this amity and love of concord from the holy Cormac: but, observes Dr. Warner, 'if he (Cormac) was the only person who had the merit of bringing about the tranquillity above mentioned, to him must be ascribed the blame of being the first that overturned it;' and the same author endeavours to prove that he was not such a saint as these historians represent him—'a just and learned prince, whom fortune favoured in all his undertakings, whom his enemies dreaded, and whom his subjects almost adored.' Be it observed, in answer to this, that every saint on earth is but—a man, and that the best of us all are liable at times to go astray.

As it was the determination of Cormac to celebrate the feast of Easter, which was approaching, with great state and magnificence at his palace of Cashel, he despatched a messenger, for this purpose, to the inhabitants of the territory adjoining it, namely, the people of Eaganach, in the neighbourhood of his see in Cashel, and subjects in his province, demanding a sufficient quantity of provision for his table and retinue, during his stay at Cashel upon that occasion. But the people of Eaganach refused to comply; 'being,' observes Dr. Warner, 'strangers to such a demand, and though they might not have objected to entertain him as their archbishop, with such a modest and humble train as is necessary to that character, yet the royal dignity required more expense than they chose to undergo for his reception.' As soon as the tribe of Dalgais,* who also belonged to his province, were apprised of this refusal, they distinguished their loyalty upon this occasion, by sending in the provision which was necessary for the support of his royal dignity whilst he staid at Cashel, and which Cormac, with many acknowledgments, received.†

Determined to try the affections of the people of Eaganach still

* The princes of these people were, by a younger branch, the descendants of Olioll Olum, who had the country of Thomond for their possession, and who always took up arms in defence of the kings of Munster, against any other provincial troops, and particularly against the army of the northern half of the kingdom. There were twelve cantreds in the division belonging to the crown of Thomond, and their territories extended to the walls of Cashel. The tribe of the Dalgais were very renowned in arms.

† Cormac, in his psalter, has celebrated the extraordinary valour of the tribe of the Dalgais, probably owing to their loyalty and liberality on this occasion.

further, the king of Munster sent another message to them, desiring that they would assist him with some of their best arms and horses, in order to enable him to make such presents to the strangers, who should repair to his court, as would be worthy of his own dignity, and honourable to the donors. The messenger was also instructed to insinuate to these people, that as they must be sensible of the obligations which they lay under to the king, and had not paid him the usual compliments on his accession to the crown of Munster, he had anticipated a ready compliance with this request. What these obligations were, cannot be ascertained; they might, in a great measure, refer to the then tranquillity and flourishing state of the island; and the usual compliments alluded to, might consist of presents or certain forms, like the addresses of the present day.

Though the people of Eaganach did not absolutely give a refusal to the king's second demand, as they had to the first, their compliance was far more mortifying than a denial; they sent to the court of Cormac all the meanest and most battered arms, and the most disabled and most ill looking horses that could be found. This affront was also resented by the loyal tribe of the Dalgais, who immediately collected some of their finest horses and furniture, and a great quantity of excellent arms and jewels, which they had saved or taken from the Danes, and presented them to their king.

According to ancient historians, Cormac was advised by the principal nobility and gentry of his province, to invade the territories of Leinster, and to demand a tribute or chief-rent from the inhabitants; which, if they refused to pay, his army should take by force. Upon the deliberations of his council, and particularly by the instigation of Flaherty, abbot of Inis-Cathy,* the king of Munster raised a numerous army, consisting of the flower of his provincial troops, and prepared for the expedition. These historians add that the king was not inclined to proceed, as he was aware from a prophetic spirit with which he was endued, that he should lose his life in the action. On this expedition Dr. Warner thus expatiates:

‘The Boromean tribute, from the province of Leinster to the monarchs of Ireland, we have heard of over and over; but what tribute could be due to the king of Munster, or upon what account the Leinster people should make an acknowledgment of subjection to that king, it is impossible for us to say. There is nothing in the history, as I remember, that can warrant any such claim; and if there was, it had been worn out by time and accidents. When the whole island, therefore, was enjoying rest and tranquillity, and the spirits of men were grown calm and sociable, to involve these two provinces, and perhaps the greatest part of the kingdom, in a new quarrel on that account, was a conduct unworthy of a good king, but in an archbishop was highly criminal. Whether the tale of his pretended prophetic spirit, which the historians have artfully

* INIS-CATHY is a beautiful and fertile island, situated in the mouth of the river Shannon, partly in the counties of Clare and Kerry. St. Patrick founded an abbey here, over which he placed St. Senan as abbot and bishop. This little See, as we have already stated, was united to that of Limerick in the year 1190. For many ages no woman was permitted to visit the island. When we bring down this history to the reign of Queen Elizabeth, we will say more of Inis-Cathy.

introduced, in order to make the world believe he was impelled to this undertaking absolutely against his will by the importunity of his council, will exculpate Cormac from this crime, shall be left to the reader's determination. But surely he might have a presentiment of his death in the approaching battle, as many a man has had, without a prophetic spirit; and many a man too has been deceived in such a foreboding.'

While the proper measures for this expedition were concerted, the king deemed it expedient to settle his private affairs, particularly on account of his presentiment that he should never return from the war. He therefore sent a messenger to Lorcan, king of Thomond, to attend him to his camp, before he passed the frontiers. Lorcan having obeyed the summons with alacrity, and a council of the principal nobility, and officers of the province of Munster having been called, the king informed them that he thought it necessary before he engaged in the war against the province of Leinster, from which he apprehended he should never return, to settle the succession to the crown, in order to defeat the pretensions of any contending parties, and prevent future disturbances. Then taking Lorcan by the hand, he presented him to the council as his lawful successor, according to the will of their great ancestor, Olioll Olum; who ordained that the crown of Munster should descend alternately to the posterity of his eldest and his second son.* Cormac then made his will, which was written in verse.†

The provincial troops having been assembled at the place of rendezvous, the monarch, attended by Flaherty, the bishop and abbot

* Olioll Olum had ordained that the succession to his province should be alternate in the posterity of his two sons; and contrary to this injunction the crown had been enjoyed by four and forty descendants from the eldest son, without interruption; and those of the youngest son had, during that period, been confined to the little government of Thomond, in that province; of which number was Lorcan, whom Cormac nominated to succeed him in the throne of Munster, and whose tribe had given him such remarkable instances of loyalty. He had an ancient title of 600 years date to plead, but then it had been set aside in forty-four successions. Cormac, however, hoped to revive it in favour of Lorcan, and to prevent any disturbances after his death.

† Dr. Warner satirically writes, "and, being very poetically inclined, made his will in verse." It should be recollected that this archbishop-king bore the character of a prophet, and as *vates* signifies prophet or poet, these characters were of course united. This will serve to give us some idea of the men and manners of those times. His golden vestment which he wore as an archbishop in divine service, his clock, his royal robes, embroidered with gold and jewels, his armour and coat of mail of polished steel, his golden chain, and his wardrobe, he bequeathed to particular friends. His legacies to abbeys and religious houses are thus enumerated: an ounce of gold, an ounce of silver, his horse and furniture to Ard-finnan: a gold and silver chalice and vestment of silk to Lismore: a gold and silver chalice, four ounces of gold, and five of silver to Cashel: three ounces of gold and an ounce of silver to Glendaloch: a horse and furniture, an ounce of gold, and an embroidered vestment to Kildare: three ounces of gold to Inis-Cathy: three ounces of gold, an embroidered vestment, and his blessing to Mountgaret, county of Wexford: and four and twenty ounces of gold to Armagh. The royal Psalter, which preserved, he said, the ancient records and monuments of his native country, and which were faithfully transcribed, he left to Cashel, where he built the cathedral, to be deposited for the use of future ages. If we consider the excessive scarcity of gold and silver in those times, these were not inconsiderable benefactions for a provincial king.

of Inis-Cathy, who was now a general, put himself at their head, and marched towards the confines of the province of Leinster. On his arrival there he ordered the whole army to halt, and sent a herald to the king of that province, to demand a yearly tribute as a testimony of subjection, or hostages for the payment of it; and in case of refusal to declare war. During the absence of the herald, Flaherty rode through the ranks for the purpose of viewing the Mamonian camp, and acquiring a knowledge of their force. His horse, however, unaccustomed to martial trappings, took fright at the noise and glitter of the arms, and fell with his rider into a ditch. Though Flaherty escaped from this accident, the soldiery were panic-struck, and, deeming it an unpropitious omen, several of them deserted.

Ambassadors from the province of Leinster accompanied the herald on his return, who, desiring to enter into a treaty with Cormac, requested a suspension of hostilities in the interim, or, if the treaty should prove ineffectual, until the month of May ensuing. It seems the harvest had just then begun, and it was mutually beneficial to both provinces, if no amicable arrangements could be made, that the contest should be postponed until the spring. In order to induce the king of Munster to accept this proposal, and to assure him that it was made through a sincere desire of peace, the king of Leinster sent him a very considerable present in money and jewels, offering hostages to remain with a neutral abbot until the treaty should be concluded. Aware of the great influence which the abbot of Inis-Cathy had with the king, noble presents were also sent to him, which Flaherty accepted, notwithstanding his disposition still remained hostile.

This proposal appeared so reasonable to Cormac, who was averse to the war, that he declared his readiness to accept it. But when the king of Munster besought the acquiescence of Flaherty, this implacable abbot not only rejected the proposal with indignation, but upbraided the king of Munster for listening to it; and even told him, in the presence of the ambassadors, that the paleness of his countenance apparently betrayed his want of courage; with many other expressions of an equal tendency. Instead of resenting with royal spirit this foul imputation, and adhering to his own determination, Cormac meekly denied the abbot's charge against him, and probably for the purpose of refuting it, consented to a prosecution of the war. He was, however, exceedingly mortified at Flaherty's conduct; for as soon as the ambassadors departed, he retired to his tent with evident signs of sorrow and strong emotions. Hither the chief officers of the army repaired to know the result of the king of Leinster's proposal. Cormac assured them that the war must be carried on; but so evident was his anguish of mind, that they endeavoured to cheer his spirits, and persuade him to take some refreshments. The king still remained inconsolable through the presentiment of falling in the field of battle; but he conjured the company to keep that apprehension a profound secret, that the soldiers, with whom he was determined to sell his life at a dear rate, should not be intimidated.

After this conversation the king of Munster requested to be left alone, that he might spend the little leisure he had from public

affairs, in preparing himself for his expected dissolution. Having sent for his confessor, he added a codicil to his will, relative to his interment, in case his body should be recovered from the enemy. Manach, confessor to the king's confessor, a man of strict piety and exemplary benevolence, entered at this very juncture, to heal, if possible, the breach, and to avert the horrors of war. 'When,' observes Dr. Warner, 'he had used all the arguments that could be drawn from humanity and religion, in support of his advice, which he addressed, no doubt, to Cormac in his character of archbishop, and found they were urged in vain, he then applied himself to him as a soldier and a king, shewing the little chance there was of his success from the superior number of the enemy. He informed him that Flan, the monarch of Ireland, disgusted at his refusing such honourable conditions as had been offered him, had joined the forces of Leinster with the royal army, and was then actually at the palace of that king, with his guards, as his auxiliary. He represented, therefore, to Cormac, the prudence and policy of accepting the hostages as preliminaries of a treaty; instead of referring their dispute to the decision of a battle, in which it was almost certain his army would be defeated.'

It seems the reproaches of Flaherty had a greater effect upon the king of Munster than all the arguments of the pious and benevolent Manach; even though immediate circumstances added weight to those arguments; for it was no sooner known in the camp that the royal army had joined the troops of Leinster, than that several of the king of Munster's soldiers deserted, causing a serious diminution in his troops: and all that remained not only declared themselves advocates for peace, but publicly expatiated on the reasonableness of the proposal made by the king of Leinster, and on the quality of the hostages intended, being of no less rank than royal blood—namely: the son of the king of Leinster, and the son of the king of Ossory. They even openly accused Flaherty, the abbot of Inis-Cathy, as the seducer of the king, and the author of all the miseries which such an unequal war must produce.

The infatuated king, however, was as blind to all those circumstances as he was deaf to all the arguments of Manach, yet Cormac is extolled by historians for his wisdom, justice and goodness, as Dr. Warner harps upon; but we have already observed that every saint has his errors: the most wise, the most just, and the best may be led astray by evil counsel. The above mentioned writer, though perhaps unintentionally, has found this excuse for him:

'But Cormac, with all his wisdom, justice, and goodness, though he was convinced by Manach's reasoning, by his own inclinations, and by the aversion which his army showed to the war, that it would be unjust, that it would be dangerous, nay, that it would be destruction to carry it on, yet so enslaved he was by his favourite—as *all kings that have favourites are*—and his favourite was a man of such an impetuous, overruling, implacable disposition, that nothing could soften him into compliance, nothing could tempt the king to thwart him.'

The commencement of hostilities at length took place: orders

were given to strike their tents, to break up the camp, and march on towards the enemy. When they arrived at the plains of *Magh Albhe*,* which the king intended for the field of battle, a camp was marked out and fortified by the side of a wood, in which Cormac staid to receive the enemy. The order of battle having been here appointed, the army was divided into three bodies: the first was commanded by the king of Ossory and the abbot of Inis-Cathy; the second by the king of Munster, and the king of the Deasies was the leader of the third.

The allied army, with the monarch of Ireland at their head, having been represented as five to one, the forces of Munster shrunk from the attack, as soon as the signal for battle was given. To add to their discouragement a Momonian general of the blood-royal, who, from the beginning, had been averse to the war, rode through the ranks, and addressing himself aloud to the soldiers, expatiated on the rashness and folly of Flaherty, and advised them to leave the priest and his clergy to fight it out by themselves, and save their own lives by flight: then clapping spurs to his horse, he galloped out of the field. This exhortation had such an effect upon the Munster forces, that the soldiers who heard it, immediately laid down their arms and betook themselves to flight. Elate with the hope of success, the allied army cut down all before them; while the troops of Munster, engaged in a cause which they disliked, for a king whose credulity they deplored, and for a general whose presumption they deprecated, became an easy prey. The king of Ossory, who had the joint command of the right wing with the bishop of Inis-Cathy, was so shocked at the dreadful slaughter of his men, that he rode with the utmost speed out of the field, calling to his remaining soldiers to follow his example before it was too late. The engagement, which began with irresistible fury, continued but a short time, as the flights were sudden and immediate. The chief of the slaughter was in the pursuit: even the king of Ossory was too late in his attempt to escape. If, after the first fury of the allied army, any persons of rank were saved, it was more for the sake of a large sum for their ransom than from a principle of humanity. Several of the most eminent clergy, principal officers and nobility, among whom were six of the petty princes of Munster, fell in this action. Even the abbot of Inis-Cathy, who was the occasion of all this bloodshed and carnage, was numbered among the prisoners.

The king of Munster had exposed himself at the head of his troops in the front of the battle, and by his exertions confuted Flaherty's base insinuations of cowardice. Unfortunately he was flung from his horse into a pit with so much violence that he was not able to rise. Some of his troops, who were making their escape from the field of action, saw his critical situation, and having with great difficulty remounted him on another horse, left him to manage for himself. Cormac, soon after, saw one of his officers, who was much in his favour, approaching, and having learned from him the entire defeat and slaughter of his army, he commanded the officer

* Whether MAGH ALBHE, the scene of this battle, is in the King's or Queen's county, we cannot presume to assert.

instantly to depart and insure his own preservation ; which injunction was reluctantly obeyed. The unfortunate king of Munster expected that his enemies would overtake him to fulfil his prediction, and in an endeavour to ride up a steep ascent, rendered exceedingly slippery by the blood of the slain, his horse made a false step, and tumbling with his rider down to the bottom, the king's neck and back-bone were broken, and he died upon the spot. 'His death was such,' observes Dr. Warner, 'as might have happened in any other field, as well as in a field of battle;' but it certainly was occasioned by the ill-advised contest. Cormac's body having been found by some of the allied army, they inhumanly cut off the head, and carried it in triumph to the monarch of Ireland. Instead, however, of receiving any reward or commendation for this service, as in all probability they expected, the monarch of Ireland, disgusted at such an unexpected sight, upbraided those barbarous ruffians for violating the law of nations, which forbids the mangling of the dead, and ordered them instantly to quit his presence : then taking up the head and kissing it, with tears in his eyes, he lamented the instability of all human greatness, and the untimely fate of this venerable king and prelate.

As soon as Flan had refreshed his troops after the victory, and received the acknowledgments of the king of Leinster for his services, he marched to Ossory, in order to settle the succession to the sovereignty of that petty kingdom, which was under the king of Munster ; there having been some dispute among the brothers of the king of Ossory, who, as before intimated, had been slain in this battle. The monarch of Ireland settled this to his satisfaction by placing the crown on the head of Dermod, the elder brother, and returned with his army to his own palace. In a short time after, Flan died a natural death, having reigned thirty-seven years, (a protracted reign indeed for this age) and was succeeded by Nial the fourth, son of Hugh the sixth, his predecessor, A. D. 916.

Though Cormac Maccuillnan had called a council for the purpose of settling the succession to the crown of Munster, and had nominated Lorcan in form, yet the council after his death, annulled the nomination, and gave the crown of Munster to another. This is a signal instance of the vanity of human foresight ; kings may decree, but the ratification depends upon the will of Heaven—this indeed leaves the character of Cormac, as a prophet, very questionable ; and proves that he was not so beloved by the people, as historians have laboured to represent.

Carroll, the king of Leinster, had derived considerable booty from this battle ; and his triumph was graced by a great number of prisoners of the most distinguished rank. Among the foremost of these, was, as before observed, Flaherty, the abbot of Inis-Cathy, who was of the blood-royal of Munster. The clergy and people of Leinster were so enraged against this man, and so deservedly, as the chief author of the war, and the cause of all the bloodshed on both sides, that they upbraided him, while he was led along, in the most opprobrious language, which must have been a mortification, more painful perhaps than death, to one of his imperious disposition.

Nor was this the only punishment he met with ; he was closely imprisoned and most severely treated during the life of Carroll, and for a year after his death. When he had received a pardon, and was released from his captivity, the abbeſs of St. Bridget, apprehending that the people would tear him to pieces, prevailed upon ſome of the clergy to go with a guard to eſcort him out of the province of Leinſter. Flaherty then retired to his monastery of Inis-Cathy, and gave himſelf up to devotion. Here he continued in the regular exerciſe of piety and repentance, till the throne of Munſter became vacant by the death of Cormac's ſucceſſor, to which he was then called as the next heir. He now proved the ſincerity of his contrition by his meritorious government of that province till his death, having been as much beloved by his ſubjects, as he had been previously execrated by the people.

The Danes having been informed of the late diſſenſions in Ireland, judged this to be a favourable opportunity to renew their attacks upon this iſland ; for they were well aware that an expedition for this purpoſe, would not only be dangerous but unſucceſſful as long as the Irish remained united among themſelves. A great fleet was therefore fitted out by the Danes for the invasion of Ireland, and ſcarcely had Nial taſted the luxuries of royalty, before he was obliged to endanger both his life and kingdom in a battle with theſe foreign enemies in the plains of Ulſter ; which, though it terminated in his favour, was attended with conſiderable loſs to both parties.

Another body of the Danes landed on the coaſt of Leinſter about the ſame time, and ravaged that province with their uſual rapacity. The king of Leinſter gathered his troops as ſoon as poſſible and gave them battle ; but his forces were completely routed by the enemy, and above ſix hundred of them maſſacred. The Danish general, encouraged by this ſucceſs, ſent home for an immediate ſupply of men and arms, in order to enlarge his conqueſts. A reinforcement was ſent with all poſſible expedition, under the command of Sitrick and the ſons of the Danish general, who had obtained the victory in Leinſter. As ſoon as the enemy's forces were united, the Danes recommenced hoſtilities with their accuſtomed violence, and the city of Dublin was taken by ſtorm.

The monarch of Ireland, alarmed at the ſucceſs of the Danes againſt his capital, and determined to oppoſe their progress, collected all the forces he could, to give them battle. Had Nial made the neceſſary delay to muſter the choiceſt troops of the four provinces inſtead of two, though it would have been at the expenſe of more plunder and violence, his reſentment in the end would have been cheaper to the people ; for the defeat of theſe foreign enemies might have been rendered complete, and the miſfortunes of his country for many years prevented. But ſuch were the reſolution and intrepidity of Nial, and ſuch his impatience to take revenge on theſe implacable enemies, that he marched againſt them only with the northern forces, whoſe number was greatly inferior to the enemy. A bold attack was made by the Irish, who cut to pieces the ranks of the Danes ; but as freſh numbers of the enemy continually poured

in, the Danes renewed the battle with increased vigour; the exhausted natives gave way and a sanguinary pursuit succeeded. Nial shared the fate of most of his generals; he fell in the field of battle with his sword in his hand, bravely fighting in defence of his country and worthy of a better fate, after a reign of only three years.

Donough, the second, a son of the late king Flan, succeeded to the throne, A. D. 919. If we may judge from the inconsiderable figure which he made in a reign of five and twenty years, and no better criterion can be desired, as the country was then in a most distracted state, we must deem him a man of humble abilities, unworthy of his descent, and of the exalted situation which he filled. The first public occurrence of this reign, which history has handed down to us, relates to a short contest about the succession to the throne of Munster, on the death of Flaherty, the abbot of Inis-Cathy, whose accession thereto we have already mentioned. Kennedy, the son of Lorcan, whom Cormac had nominated for his successor, put in his claim upon this vacancy, and was supported by a great party. The mother, however, of Ceallach, a prince of that house, apprehensive that her son should be excluded from his right, as he had no military force to espouse his cause, and being a woman of considerable address and spirit, went to Kennedy unattended, and having asserted her son's right and expostulated with him about the injustice of his design, prevailed upon his rival to relinquish his pretensions. Ceallach was accordingly proclaimed king of Munster. The Danes now made such bold incursions into this province, that Ceallach was obliged to have recourse to arms to defend his crown. A battle ensued; in which, and in several others which rapidly succeeded, the advantage was on the side of the provincial troops, the wife and sister of the Danish general having been taken prisoners in one of them. The captive ladies were treated with great politeness at Waterford, by the king of Munster; and when they were released, the Danes, who had encountered many difficulties during their defeats, thought proper to abandon this province and look out for other settlements. They accordingly joined themselves for the present to their countrymen in Dublin and its adjacent territories, appointing Sitrick, the general, to be their king. This Danish general, is said by historians, to have been the son of the tyrant Turgesius, by whose devastations and usurpations, this country had suffered so much above eighty years before. Dr. Warner thinks it more likely that he was his grandson, and regrets that the old historians paid such little attention to chronology, for 'though it was not impossible, it was highly improbable, he should have been his son.' It is certain, however, that the same ferocity, malice and deceit, which were practised by Turgesius, were equalled, if not exceeded, by Sitrick. The proud heart of this Dane, was sorely nettled on being driven by force of arms from the fertile province of Munster, where his countrymen, under his conduct, had made themselves settlements in and near the seaports, and he was therefore resolved that what could not be effected by valour, should be accomplished by treachery.

Ceallach, the king of Munster, had refused to pay Donough, the

monarch of Ireland, the usual tax, or chief rent, claimed by his predecessors as sovereigns of the island, and the homage and submission always made to them as such. His reasons for this refusal are not recorded. The monarch, however, had the old remedy of calling him to an account at the head of his army; but Ceallach had given so many shining proofs of his valour in his engagements with the Danes, that the monarch, convinced of his enterprising spirit and of his genius, which was far superior to his own, chose rather to submit to the affront, than seek redress by arms. Sitrick, apprised of this difference between the monarch of Ireland and the king of Munster, deemed it expedient for the success of a stratagem, which he had devised for the destruction of the latter, to whom his recent defeats had been chiefly owing, to communicate it to the monarch, without whose approbation it would not be policy to attempt the execution of it.

The monarch of Ireland, instead of being startled and shocked at the base treachery of Sitrick, when apprised of his perfidious design against the king of Munster, not only consented to, but applauded the foul conspiracy; and even promised the villain who projected it, his friendship and alliance after its execution. Having secured this material point, the artful Dane proceeded immediately upon his plan: he sent a messenger to Ceallach, to inform him that as he did not intend to renew hostilities against the province of Munster, and yet was very desirous to remain in Ireland, he should be very happy to enter into a treaty with him offensive and defensive; and in order to prove his sincerity in this proposal, and to cement the alliance the stronger, he offered him his sister of the royal house of Denmark, a lady of great beauty, in marriage, and to whom the king was no stranger, as she had been his prisoner in Waterford.

The king of Munster, being himself an honest open hearted man, entertained no suspicion of treachery; so that when the proposals were made by the messenger he readily accepted them. The recollection of the lady's beauty with whom he had often conversed, tended to rekindle the flame of love; and being naturally amorous, the dishonour of marrying into the family of the mortal enemy, and invader of his country, and of acquiescing in their settlement there, appeared under the specious disguise of establishing peace and tranquillity in his province. Thus delighted with, instead of being alarmed at the proposal, he required no hostages; he started no objections to a treaty which was offered by an inveterate and vanquished enemy; but taking it for granted that the proposals contained every thing which these savage invaders could do to atone for the miseries which they had brought upon his native country, or which the Irish ought to desire for their future security, Ceallach sent back the Danish messenger, with an assurance of his consent to the proposed treaty, and of his intention to repair as soon as possible to the court of Sitrick, in order to ratify it by a marriage with his sister.

The noble and expensive preparations for the king's journey and marriage, now occupied the whole attention of the province of Mun-

ster. Besides a splendid retinue, and princely equipage, orders were given for the guards and the choicest troops of the province to be ready to attend him, for the purpose of conducting the queen home to his palace, with all that state and magnificence which were suitable to the occasion. When Kennedy was informed of the king's intention, for whom he had kindly waved his own pretensions to the crown, and with whom he had lived always after upon terms of strict friendship, he represented to Ceallach the great imprudence of taking the flower of the troops as well as guards, and for the sake of a little more empty parade, leaving the province defenceless and open to any invader. Kennedy, notwithstanding, approved of the king's intended marriage, for a suspicion of treachery on the part of Sitrick, never entered his mind, no more than it did that of Ceallach. Indeed the terms of accommodation appeared so advantageous to the foreigners, without any acquisition to the natives, but a wife for one of their kings, who well deserved her, that there was no room for suspecting any insidious design. But as the monarch of Ireland had been incensed at the king of Munster's refusal of the usual homage and tribute, there was some reason for apprehending that Donough might seize this opportunity of invading and plundering his province, if left unguarded. This, no doubt, was the cause of Kennedy's apprehensions, when he advised the king to take only a few of his body guards, and some of the young nobility with him, offering his own son, a prince of the house of Munster, to attend him. Ceallach was so sensible of the propriety of Kennedy's advice, that he was determined to follow it; and accordingly, with a few of the nobility, with Dunchan, the son of Kennedy, and only his body guards, he commenced his journey, committing to Dunchan's father the care of his province during his absence.

The news of the arrival of the king of Munster, within the environs of Dublin, where Sitrick kept his court, having been brought to the Danish chief, his wife, who was an Irish lady of great family, upbraided her husband for his imprudence and mean spiritedness in offering for a wife, so fine a woman as his sister was, to the mortal enemy of his country people, by whom so many of the Danish nobility had been destroyed. As the lady appeared to take this reported alliance so much in dudgeon, Sitrick, in order to pacify her, candidly assured her that it was only a stratagem to entice the king of Munster from his province, that he might effect by deception, what he could not achieve by power. Instead of the nuptial pleasures which the king flattered himself he should enjoy with his sister, he assured her that Ceallach should be made a sacrifice to the ghosts of those renowned Danes whom he had destroyed.

Though Sitrick's disclosure of his vile purpose, struck the lady with horror and astonishment, she had ingenuity enough to conceal her emotions, and seem delighted with the cowardly plan. Early, however, the next morning she arose, and disguising her person as much as possible, quitted Dublin with great privacy, and took the road through which she knew the king of Munster must come. As soon as Ceallach arrived at the place where she was waiting for him, she discovered herself to the king, confessed her husband's

treacherous design, and advised him to return with precipitation, and escape the snare which was laid for him. Having thus unburdened her mind without bringing her husband into any danger, she returned to Sitrick's palace in Dublin in the same private manner. The anxiety of this lady in thus endeavouring to save the life of the king of Munster, and baffle the vile intention of her husband, cannot be wondered at, when we consider that she was a native of Ireland, and that she thus exerted herself in favour of a countryman. But her apparent aversion to the marriage of that countryman to her husband's sister, is thus accounted for by Dr. Warner, 'she had been secretly in love with Ceallach from the time that she was his prisoner at Waterford with Sitrick's sister. As little therefore could she endure to see him in the possession of another, though she was a woman of honour, and could not hope to enjoy him herself, as she could to see him sacrificed to her husband's vengeance.' Love is certainly a powerful reason; but it is probable that this woman of honour suspected there was some secret villany in her husband's proposal, and that her expostulations on the intended marriage were merely dissembled. When a woman's curiosity is excited, dissimulation is always at hand, to assist her in gratifying it; she knew Sitrick's malicious disposition, and by affecting a dislike to the king of Munster, won his confidence.

The discovery of Sitrick's treachery both mortified and astonished Ceallach, who turned back with his retinue in order to escape the machinations of his enemy. His retreat, however, was unexpectedly impeded by two parties of Danish soldiers, one on each side of the road, at a distance not to be discovered, when the king of Munster had passed them. Whether Sitrick had any suspicion that his secret had transpired, or whether he apprehended that Ceallach might escape the assassination, when he had him in his power at Dublin, that these forces had been thus despatched to cut off his retreat, cannot be ascertained. The former is more likely, for it is possible that the conduct of his wife, notwithstanding her disguise and secrecy, had been observed. Though thus surprised and surrounded by the Danish soldiers, who attacked the king's body guards with great violence, yet, when they had recovered themselves, and had received Ceallach's orders to take vengeance in the best manner they could, no time was lost, and no valour was wanting, in making a just and furious resistance. Indeed the Irish retaliated with such prowess, that had it not been for continual reinforcements, the Danes would have been completely routed: for they were so near the city, when the skirmish commenced, that the alarm was instantly given, and fresh forces poured in so fast upon the Irish, that they could never diminish the number of the enemy, though their own was decreasing every moment. The resistance of the Irish was, notwithstanding, long and resolute, but their defeat was inevitable: and it was the hard fate of the king of Munster, and of his friend Dunchan, the son of Kennedy, to be taken prisoners, and led in triumph to Dublin.

The tyrant no doubt would have been better pleased had they increased the number of the slain, as the end of his diabolical pro-

ject would then have been answered. But when they were delivered up to him as prisoners of war, there was no feasible pretence for putting him to death ; for as Sitrick's wife and sister had been treated with profound respect, when they were Ceallach's prisoners, he was bound by the laws of honour to be equally kind to his present captives, and he well knew that a flagrant violation of those laws would be returned upon himself and his own people. Thus perplexed by the desire of vengeance, and the apprehension of breaking those punctilious rules observed in all civilized countries, he offered them such terms of ransom as he was confident would not be agreed to ; and, if those were refused, he declared his resolution of removing them to Armagh in so many days, and of transporting them from thence to Norway. The terms of ransom were no less than the delivering into his hands the towns of Limerick, Cashel, Waterford and Cork, with all the strong garrisons in the province of Munster, and an erick, or fine for every officer or soldier killed by the Mamonians in the battles fought with the Danes by Ceallach ; for the performance of which conditions the prince of Munster, and all the sons of the princes and chiefs of the province, were to be hostages.

Ceallach, disguising his indignation when he heard those exorbitant demands, begged permission to despatch one of his own domestics, who was taken prisoner with him, to Munster, in order to know if their liberty could be purchased on those conditions. This request was granted by Sitrick, who explained the terms of their ransom to the messenger, but the latter had been privately instructed by Ceallach, to assure Kennedy, that whatever might be his own and Dunchan's fate, he should never allow the Danes any footing in his province, that he should assume the government of Munster in his absence, send Donough, his general, with the best troops he could get together, to Armagh, in order to rescue them out of the hands of the Danes, who would soon remove them thither, and to order all the ships in the harbour of Munster to Dundalk, where the Danish fleet lay, lest the army should not arrive soon enough at Armagh. The messenger, no doubt, received these instructions from the king previous to his returning an answer to Sitrick's demand. Be that, however, as it may, the messenger on his arrival at Munster, absolutely found Kennedy in a condition almost ready to execute the king's command. Some of Ceallach's guards, it seems, had, in their unexpected rencounter with the Danes, the good fortune to escape ; and, on their return home, they made known the treachery of Sitrick, the slaughter of their comrades, and the captivity of Ceallach and Dunchan. This discovery set the whole province in an uproar, and they waited for nothing but the word of command to revenge the perfidy of the Danes, and to rescue the royal prisoners. Kennedy, who was next in succession to the king, readily anticipated their wishes, and the troops were actually assembled, when the messenger from Ceallach arrived.

As soon as the terms which Sitrick had demanded for the ransom of the royal prisoners were made known, the resentment of the people was considerably aggravated against the Danes, and Ken-

nedy had no further trouble than this communication to enable him to obey the king's injunctions. A thousand of the Dalgais had been assembled by his orders about Cashel, and through the activity of the general Donough, three thousand of the Eugeneans had been collected. These were immediately united, and being put under the command of Donough, and the three brothers of Kennedy, they prepared for their march towards Armagh. In order to inspire the general with zeal and ardour on this occasion, Kennedy addressed him with a representation of the nobility of his descent, the magnanimity and heroism of his ancestors, who had been kings of Munster, the probability of their success against their perfidious enemies, and the advantage to the province, and the glory to himself, which would be derived from the enterprise. In their march they were joined by several parties of the Dalgais, out of Thomond and other places, which, before their departure from the province, made the army not less than six thousand strong.

Ceallach had also sent instructions for all the naval force of Munster to be made ready, in order to engage the Danish fleet, which were riding in the harbour of Dundalk, for the purpose of transporting him to Norway. This is the first mention of a naval armament in the history of the Irish, though they were situated on an island, and had been so often and so long subject to the ravages of the Danes, whose invasions could only be effected by sea. Till the present occasion the Irish seem to have displayed no military skill on board ships, either to defend themselves or to attack an enemy. The order now for a naval armament was obeyed with the same alacrity and promptitude, which were exhibited in collecting the land forces, and the command of the exhibition was given to Failbhe, the king of Desmond; and the fleet, consisting of sixty ships, well manned and armed, set sail for the harbour of Dundalk, about the same time that the army began its march towards Armagh. Though neither cannon nor fire arms were then invented, yet they were at par with the enemy, and capable of annoying them with their arrows, darts, and javelins in close quarters, and with their swords and daggers when they laid each other on board. If the Irish had had recourse to this mode of defence before, they might have prevented the inroads of a Turgesius or a Sitrick: necessity at length prompted a measure which had been too long neglected.

While the army halted at Connaught for the sake of forage and provisions, a party of archers, and another party armed with swords and targets from Munster, to the number of five hundred each, joined the main body, and rendered the forces of Munster a very formidable army. While they were raising contributions on the country for their subsistence, the prince of Connaught, who, at such a crisis, should cheerfully have lent his aid against the Danes, deemed his people aggrieved and harassed, remonstrated with the general against the injustice of plundering those who were not parties in the quarrel, and desired that he would order the booty to be restored, which the Mamonian soldiers had collected. Had this remonstrance and demand been as just as they were unreasonable, it was not in the power of Donough to prevent the one or to comply with the

other. The army was marching against the common enemy of the Irish: it was impossible to carry sufficient provision with them; it must be subsisted on its march, and their country people ought to have made themselves parties in the quarrel, and to have contributed voluntarily to their necessities. In order to convince the prince of Connaught, that it was merely for the sake of subsistence, and not of plunder, that the army distressed the subjects of his father, Donough assured him, that if any provisions remained after the wants of his men were satisfied, they should be returned. Deeming the general's non-compliance with his demand an insult, and finding the Mamonian army too powerful for him to meddle with, the hot headed prince of Connaught, rather than not take his revenge, absolutely took it at the expense of his own country, and even to the advantage of the common enemy, by privately sending intelligence to the Danes that the Mamonians were on their march to attack them, with the determination of liberating their king and Dunchan, the son of Kennedy.

While Sitrick was waiting at Armagh, where the royal prisoners were, for Kennedy's answer to the proposed terms of ransom, he received this secret information from the prince of Connaught. Hereupon he ordered the Danish earls, who had the care of the prisoners, to march out of the city with all their troops, and give the Mamonians battle, whilst he with his guards might secretly remove them on board the fleet at Dundalk. Whether Sitrick thought only to make a diversion for this purpose, by ordering his forces to give battle to the Irish army, and that they might make good their retreat without any considerable loss, or whether he intended to remove the prisoners at all events, even to the sacrificing of his own forces, that were sent to cause this diversion, does not appear, but the Irish army was evidently stronger than he suspected. In the beginning of this sudden action with the Danish earls, Donough was informed by some whom he had made prisoners, that the king of Munster and Dunchan were carried away to Dundalk. This disappointment so enraged him that he ordered no quarter to be given, and few of the enemy escaped the slaughter. Early the next morning he marched his army to Dundalk, with the hopes of surprising the Danish general and recovering the liberty of his prisoners; but the few Danes who had made their escape, repaired thither, and informed Sitrick of the great strength of the Munster army. Now convinced that it was impossible for him to oppose the Mamonians, by whom the chief of his army was already routed, Sitrick resolved to secure his prisoners, and provide for his own safety and that of his men, by getting them all, as fast as possible, on board his ships which lay in the bay.*

The army of Munster proceeded to Dundalk with the determina-

* DUNDALK, the capital of the county of Louth, the assize town, and a place of trade and opulence, is advantageously situated in the recess of a noble bay, on the north-eastern coast of Leinster, at the distance of 50 English miles from Dublin, on the high road running from the metropolis to Newry and Belfast. The vicinity of Dundalk is a most fertile country, and ornamented with several rich and beautiful domains. At a proper time and place we will have to say more of Dundalk. Boston, April, 1836.

tion of surrounding the Danes, and making them prisoners of war, or putting them all to the sword: but no sooner had they entered the place than they found themselves again disappointed: the embarkation had been effected; the royal prisoners carried aboard, and the enemy out of reach. While they were crowding along the shore, lamenting this misfortune, and considering what was best to be done, they perceived a large fleet under a brisk gale of wind steering directly towards the Danish vessels, which they soon discovered to be the fleet from Munster. The Irish army were as much delighted at this discovery as the Danes were surprised and alarmed. The latter, when they had embarked, thought themselves as much out of the reach of the Irish, as if they had been landed in their own country. Instead of being thus secure as they thought, they found themselves on a sudden in the greatest danger: there was no possibility of escaping the Irish fleet, which would be almost along side of them before they could weigh anchor and get under sail; and if they attempted to disembark they were sure of being cut to pieces by the Irish army. In this dilemma they could only trust to their valour and dexterity, which was all that they had now left to extricate them from their imminent peril.

Failbhe, the king of Desmond, perceiving the Danes in the utmost hurry and confusion at his approach, made all the haste he could to begin the attack, consistently with that order and disposition of his ships, on which the success of naval engagements in a great measure depends. Though the Danes were under a manifest disadvantage in having scarcely time enough to form into a line of battle, yet they were much superior in number, having all their guards, and the remainder of their land forces on board; which, in ships without ordnance, make the principal part of their strength. The Irish commander, with great policy, sought out the ship of the Danish general, and, after attacking it with considerable impetuosity, boarded it sword in hand. He had scarcely been a moment on board before he saw Ceallach bound to the mast. The sight of the king in that position, whose liberty was the great cause of the expedition which he had the command of, so stimulated his zeal and valour, that, regardless of prudence, safety or any other consideration, he made his way to him through blood and slaughter. As soon as he had cut the cords with his sword, which had fastened Ceallach to the mast, he advised him instantly to repair on board the Irish vessel which he had just quitted, and leave him to fight it out with the Danish chief. Ceallach took his advice, and the Irish commander remained dealing death and destruction around him: but being supported only by the few seamen who assisted in boarding the ship, and being surrounded at last by the Danish guards, his ardour and intrepidity were insufficient to clear the deck, and, overpowered by numbers, the valiant Failbhe fell, covered with wounds.

Sitrick being convinced that upon the loss of his own ship would in all probability follow the loss of all his fleet, exerted his utmost skill and valour to save it; and that he might strike a terror and dismay into the Irish, he ordered the head of Failbhe to be cut off and exposed to view. This tended, however, to exasperate the

Irish, and Fingal, who was second in command to Failbhe, when informed of his predecessor's fate, called aloud to his men to follow him, and, resolving to revenge his death, boarded the Danes with an irresistible fury. The contest was hot and sanguinary; but there being so many among the Danes to supply the place of the slain or wounded, that the Irish had no prospect of obtaining the victory. Sensible as Fingal was of his inability to possess himself of the Danish ship, yet he was too valiant an Irishman to think of retreating to his own; especially without his revenge on Sitrick for his inhumanity in mangling the corpse of Failbhe. He therefore adopted a resolution which is not to be paralleled in any history: for, making his way up to Sitrick with his sword against all that opposed him, he grasped him close in his arms, and threw himself with his enemy into the sea, where they both perished together. Two other Irish captains being fired with the magnanimity of Fingal's action, and being intent on securing the victory to their countrymen, made their way through the enemy with redoubled fury, and boarding the ship in which were Tor and Magnus, the surviving brothers of Sitrick, and then the chief commanders of the Danes, they rushed violently upon them, caught them up in their arms after the example of Fingal, and, jumping overboard with them, shared with their adversaries a watery grave.

Astonished and dismayed at the desperate achievements of the Irish, the Danes, who had lost their general and his brothers, as well as vast numbers of other officers and men; began to slacken in their exertions, particularly as the royal prisoners were restored to liberty. The Irish perceiving the enemy dispirited and giving way, pursued their success with increased ardour, and boarded most of the Danish ships. They obtained a complete victory, but not without prodigious loss. The Danes, besides their numbers, had greatly the superiority of skill in naval encounters; and they not only fought for their present safety, but for their future establishment in the island. On the other side the Irish contended for the recovery of their king and country out of the hands of perfidious usurpers: it was also the first engagement at sea which they ever attempted, and notwithstanding the disadvantages of number and inexperience, they won the victory, though it was dearly purchased. The numerous land forces, which they boasted, were incapable of rendering any assistance: they stood on the shore in sight of the whole engagement like men distracted; because they could not join their countrymen, who were overmatched in skill and numbers, and whose defeat they every moment anticipated. But great was their joy when their enemies were routed; for a few only of the lightest galleys of the Danes escaped to sea:—great was their joy when the Irish fleet approached the shore, after a victory so extraordinary. Nor was Ceallach himself less delighted with his deliverance from a constant apprehension of death or slavery, through the savage disposition of Sitrick, with whom neither humanity nor the laws of nations had any weight. The king therefore ordered the most grateful acknowledgments to be made to all his forces by sea and land for their fidelity and affection; and espe-

cially to the former, by whose invincible courage he was enabled to regain his freedom ; though doubtless had the latter been able to have overtaken the enemy the victory would have been purchased at a less price. This was indeed the most obstinate and bloody battle that had been known between the Irish and Danes for many years. After giving instructions for the care of the wounded and the prisoners, and providing sufficiently for his fleet, the king of Munster put himself once more at the head of his army, in order to return to the government of his province.

But the king of Leinster, envious of the glory which the Mamonians had acquired, though over the enemies of his country, prepared to obstruct the passage of the king of Munster through his dominions, and to harass him in his march. For this despicable purpose he collected all the forces he could at so short a warning, and determined to place them in different ambuscades, that they might fall upon Ceallach's army and surprise them when unprepared for any attack. Though this base and treacherous plan against his countrymen was secretly meditated, he found it difficult to put it into execution without a speedy detection. Indeed the gathering of his troops together, without any apparent motive, was sufficient to cause an alarm ; and in all probability there were some about him, who had too much honour—too much love for their country, to encourage such a nefarious proceeding. By some means or other, it seems, Ceallach obtained timely notice of the treacherous design ; and being just incensed at the king's unnatural conduct, he proclaimed it to his whole army, desiring no quarter to be given to the men of Leinster if they engaged in such an unworthy enterprise. The king of Munster's severe injunction having been reported by some deserters to the king of Leinster, (probably by connivance, if not by order,) the latter so much dreaded the resentment of the victorious Mamonians, who were now prepared for their defence, that he thought proper to decline his malignant purpose ; and dismissing the forces which he had suddenly assembled, the army of Munster prosecuted their march without any molestation. Happily the king of Leinster was afraid of executing his cowardly project, which would have been productive of much unnecessary bloodshed, and have probably rendered Ireland a more permanent settlement for the Danes.

The return of Ceallach from his captivity to Munster, was the cause of universal exultation among his subjects, whose joy on this occasion was a testimony of their great respect for his eminent virtues. When he had settled himself in his government and allowed his forces sufficient recreation after their toils, he resolved on expelling all the remaining Danes from his kingdom, through whose oppression the Irish had suffered so much, and from whose treachery he had such a narrow escape. Having therefore collected the whole strength of his province, he began with those that inhabited Limerick and its environs, where he obtained a complete victory ; five hundred having been put to the sword and all the rest taken prisoners. From hence he marched his army to the county of Cashel, where there was a great deal of plunder, defended by five hundred

Danes: the former he took, the latter he put to the sword. The Danish general having heard of this defeat, gave him battle, with the hope of recovering the plunder and revenging the slaughter of his countrymen; but the Mamonians were too powerful for him; a great part of his army was slain, and with much difficulty, he, and the remainder, escaped on board their ships and put to sea. Having thus rendered his country free from those invaders and secured the blessings of peace to his province, he made an alliance with the king of the Deasies,* to whom he gave his sister in marriage; and in a short time after descended to his grave to the inexpressible grief of all his subjects."

CHAPTER LXII.

Prince Mahon is raised to the throne of Munster.—The Danes are overthrown and routed in several battles.—Death of the monarch Donough,—is succeeded by Congall.—Brian Boroikme, the brother of Mahon, becomes King of Munster, and bravely revenges his brother's death.—The enmity and envy of Donald, King of the Deasies, against Brian.—Donald O'Neil succeeds Congall as Monarch of Ireland.—Internal dissensions amongst the Irish Princes.—Donald abdicates the throne, to which Malachy II. is elevated.—Battle at Tara,—Dublin besieged.—A peace is ratified with the Danes, who soon, however, violate the terms of it;—consequent hostilities.

AFTER the death of Ceallach, which event, according to the chronology of O'Halloran, occurred in the year 952, Feargradh, a prince of the Eugenean dynasty, was invested with the sovereignty of Munster. Immediately after the accession of this prince, the Danes, in great force, penetrated into Munster, and succeeded in capturing Limerick, and in making themselves masters of all the islands in the Shannon. Feargradh raised an army to oppose the Danes, of which he gave the command to his brother, Lachtna, king of Tho-

* THE DEASIES. Under this name, in ancient times, was designated the principal portion of the county of Waterford, of which the O'Fays, before the arrival of the English, were, for many ages, sovereign princes. The designation is derived from the *Decii*, a colony that, in the third century, inhabited the southern districts of the two Meaths. In the year 278, that people rebelled against the monarch, Cormac Mac Art, in consequence of an affront which their chief had received from Prince *Kellach*, the king's son. Determined on having revenge, they forced their way into the royal palace of Tara, and slew, during the absence of Cormac, before the queen's eyes, Prince Kellach. Their revenge being thus gratified by the massacre of the unfortunate prince, the Decii, with all their families, fled from the punishment which they knew the king would, had they remained in the Meaths, have justly inflicted on them. After wandering through the country for some time, they, at length, found a settlement, in the county of Waterford. The territory of the Deasies, which now comprehends two baronies, in the county of Waterford, called "Deasies within, and Deasies without;" the former being bounded on the south and east by the sea, and on the west by the river Blackwater, and on the north by the Deasies without the Drum mountains. The latter barony is bounded on the south by the Deasies within Drum, on the south east by the sea, on the west by Coshmore and Coshbride, on the east by upper third and middle third districts, and on the north by the barony of Glanchirry, all in the county of Waterford.

mond.* While this prince was on his march towards the Shannon, where the Danes were encamped, at Killaloe, he received tidings of his brother's death, which induced him to return to the neighbourhood of Limerick, where he was crowned by the bishop of that see, king of Munster, A. D. 953.

Before the festivities of his coronation, however, were over, he was assassinated by two conspirators of the name of O'Flynn, and O'Carney; but by the valour and resolution of Mahon and Brian, the murdered king's brothers, the crown was wrested from the hands of the bloody conspirators. Mahon was raised to the throne of Munster. As soon as he had obtained the sceptre, he and his brother Brian, at the head of a large army, attacked the Danes at several points, and succeeded in cutting off many of their detachments, and in capturing several of their strong holds adjoining the Shannon.

We should have mentioned before, that Prince Dunchan, the brother of the present king of Munster, who was with Ceallach at the battle of Dundalk, was killed in battle, fighting against the Danes, in A. D. 952. In the year 957, Congall was killed in battle against the combined forces of the Danes, Ultonians and Lagenians. His successor in the monarchy of Ireland, was Donald O'Neil, the son of King Neil *Gluin-duibh*. Scarcely had the sceptre been a year in his grasp, when Daniel, the son of the late monarch, at the head of an army of Lagenians and Danes, advanced to Tara to dethrone the reigning king. Donald, determined to maintain his power, or die, rather than relinquish it, gave battle to his enemies at a place called by O'Halloran, *Cill-mona*, (or the wood of the bog) in which the son of Congall, and his army, were defeated after a brave and bloody struggle for life and victory. This engagement took place in A. D. 958, and in it were slain, Daniel, the pretender to the throne, and two of his princely allies, Argal, son of the king of Ulster, and O'Carroll, son of the prince of Orgial.† Soon after gaining that

* THOMOND, was the ancient name of the county of Clare. The district owes its present appellation to the historical fact of Edward I. having granted that portion of Ireland, in A. D. 1296, to the sons of the then Duke of Gloucester, Richard and Thomas de Clare. Its ancient proprietors were O'Briens, McGees, and Kennedys, descendants of King *Olioll Olum*, who reigned, as has been seen in this history, in Munster, in the third century. The election of DANIEL O'CONNELL, in 1828, as a member of the British Parliament, a year before the passage of the Catholic Emancipation Bill, in the Imperial Legislature, will ever reflect honour on the spirit and independence of the men of Clare. This county is bounded on the east and south by the river Shannon, on the north and west by the county of Galway, and the Atlantic ocean. By a late survey it appears that it contains 476,213 plantation acres, 79 parishes, nine baronies (namely, Corcomroe, Inchiquin, Ibrickan, Moyferta, Clanderlagh, Bunratty, two in the Islands, and Tullagh,) and 110,000 inhabitants. ENNIS is the capital of the county, a fine and prosperous town, which stands at the distance of 142 English miles S. W. from Dublin. Boston, April, 1836.

† In a preceding chapter of this history we have stated that the district called *Orgial*, comprehended the present counties of Louth, Armagh and Monaghan. The reason it was called *Orgial*, arose from the fact, that in the year 336, when the three champions, the Collas, were granted this territory, they, in their treaty with the monarch Muireadhach, stipulated for themselves and their posterity,—“that,” writes O'Halloran, “whenever hostages were demanded from them, if shackled, their fetters were to be of pure gold;—hence, Orgial from *Or*- (gold)

victory, the monarch invaded Connaught, where he levied large contributions, and compelled the king of that province to deliver to him hostages of the first rank. Meanwhile, Mahon, king of Munster, and his heroic brother Brian, were annoying the Danes by a vigorous and harassing desultory warfare. In A. D. 959, the Danes, to oppose the triumphant progress of Mahon and Brian, collected all the forces which could be spared from the defence of Cork, Waterford and Limerick. To Muiris, an experienced general, was assigned the command of the Danes. That officer, with a force of 3,000 of the best Danish troops, advanced to the camp of the Munster army at Sulchoid.* Mahon and Brian made a desperate charge on their assailants, broke their centre, and threw their right and left wings into irreparable disorder. The gallant Brian, to profit by their confusion, repeated his attack with redoubled bravery, and succeeded in killing 2,000 Danes, including Muiris and his principal officers. This signal victory appalled the Danes with consternation. The victorious brothers pursued the fugitive Danes to the city of Limerick, which they entered pellmell with the enemy, and put the garrison to the sword, and set fire to the city. To follow up his success, Mahon fitted out a large fleet of sloops at Killaloe, and from the river Shannon made a descent upon Connaught.

On the banks of Longhree, a lake situated between the counties of Roscommon and Longford, and through which the Shannon passes, Mahon and Brian encamped. Here Feargal, son of Ruarc, king of Connaught, in conjunction with a force of Danes, attacked Mahon; but his assault was repelled, and himself and his army put to flight. "Feargal," says Dr. O'Halloran, "in his flight plunged into the river, and threw away his shield, which Mahon found, and his posterity used it in all succeeding wars with the Connacians. The loss of a shield, much more to throw it away, was shameful, not only in Ireland, but among the ancient *Celtæ*." The brave Mahon and his valiant brother Brian, returned to Munster, where they defeated the Danes in several engagements. Mahon's good fortune and splendid exploits commanded the admiration of his friends, and excited the envy of his princely contemporaries. Amongst his most implacable enemies was *Maolmuadh*, the son of Brain, of the Eugenean dynasty, who, with his own adherents joined with a considerable force of Danes, marched against Mahon, in the hope of defeating and dethroning him. In two engagements fought in the county of Limerick, victory, as usual, attended the arms of King Mahon.

The bishop of Cork and his clergy, grieved and pained that two Irish princes should be engaged in a civil war, and frittering away the power that should be employed against the common enemy, interposed their mediation for the patriotic purpose of reconciling the rival chiefs. Mahon, whose soul was the mansion of religion and

and *gial* (or *angioll*) a hostage." Before the invasion of the English the principal proprietors of Louth were the O'Carroll's,—of Monaghan, the McMähons,—and of Armagh, the O'Neils and O'Hanlons.

* *SULCHOID* (in Irish *Sulchath*, or the place of the conflict) is situated in the vicinity of the city of Limerick, and is an extensive plain almost walled round by mountains.

heroism, agreed to leave the settlement of the existing difference betwixt himself and Maolmuadh, to the arbitration of the bishops of Cork and Limerick. O'Donovan, chief of Kerry, the ambassador of Maolmuadh, appointed a place in the county of Limerick, where the competitors should meet to adjust their disputes by the decision of the prelates. On the appointed day, the confiding and courageous Mahon, attended by only twelve noblemen, repaired to the designated place of rendezvous. But as the brave, but unfortunate king was approaching the point of destination, the treacherous O'Donovan, at the head of a chosen band of soldiers, rushed from an ambuscade on the prince, killed all his attendants, and seized and manacled himself, and then carried him off to the camp of Maolmuadh. He was thence conveyed to the fortress of Macroom,* in the county of Cork, and atrociously murdered.

As soon as Brian heard of his brother's cruel death, he became inflamed with a desire for revenge,—he marched into Kerry, in the spring of the year 966, attacked O'Donovan, whose forces were augmented by a large body of Danish mercenaries, overthrew them, and killed O'Donovan with his own hand. After this victory, Brian was crowned by the archbishop of Cashel, king of the two Munsters. The usurper Maolmuadh, still kept the field, and assumed the title of king of Munster. Brian, resolved to crush his rival, marched to his camp with a formidable force, attacked, defeated and slew him. In this battle, Prince Murrough, Brian's eldest son, though then but thirteen years of age, displayed the manly prowess of a hero. It has been even asserted by some of our historians, that it was he that killed Maolmuadh. The heroic Brian, having now "no rival near the throne," fitted out in the Shannon a large fleet of boats, in which he embarked with the flower of his army, and sailed to the island of Scattery,† where the Danes were encamped in great force. In spite of their opposition he effected a landing, and succeeded in storming their camp, and in forcing their shattered remains to fly

* The market and post town of MACROOM, is situated on the river Sullane, in the barony of Muskerry, county of Cork, at the distance of 184 English miles from Dublin, and 18 from the city of Cork, in a western direction. The mail coach road from Cork to Killarney, runs through this town. "This place," writes BREWER, in his *Beauties of Ireland*, "is said to take its name from a celebrated crooked oak, which formerly grew here;—and those who are fond of investigating etymologies, will not fail to observe that there are, in the vicinity of the town, several vestiges of monuments appearing to have been erected in ages during which the oak was an object of religious sanctity. The river Lany unites with the Sullane, at a short distance from the town, and the conjoined streams shortly afterwards fall into the river Lee. The buildings of this town have experienced some improvement in recent years, and there are now several neat and good houses. This, however, is a place of but little trade, and it has no staple manufacture. The castle of Macroom is boldly situated on an acclivity that overhangs the river Sullane, at the west part of the town, in the vicinity of the Budge. It is believed that this fortress was originally built in the reign of John, either by the Carews or the Daltons." On the forfeiture, in 1690, of the estates of the Earl of Clancarty, King William made a grant of the Earl's lands in this neighbourhood, to the ancestors of the present Lord Bandon, and those of Robert Eyre, Esq., who now inhabits the castle.

† SCATTERY, or *Inis-Cathy*, is an island situated in the mouth of the river Shannon, between the counties of Clare and Kerry. In addition to the brief description of it which we have already given in a preceding chapter of this history,

from the island. The victorious Brian marched towards Limerick, besieged that city, and soon compelled the Danish garrison to surrender. According to Dr. O'Halloran, the Danes of Limerick surrendered to Brian in the year 970.

"The great success of the Irish under Brian, in the southern province," writes McDermott, "had a good effect on their countrymen in the north, who resolved to oppose the progress of the Danes in Ulster. Accordingly the provincial troops were all assembled under the command of Murtough, the son of Neil, the general: the attack

we would, for the interest of our readers, quote from a work, recently published, entitled "*Landscape Illustrations of Moore's Irish Melodies*," the following sketch:

"Inniscattery, or the Island of Scatterry, near the mouth of

'The spacious Shenan [Shannon] spreading like a sea,'

has been styled in an Irish MS. called the Book of Ballinote, 'the wonder of Ireland.' And well it may, if we are to credit the legend which Mr. Moore has followed in his version of the dialogue between St. Senanus and the lady who sought his holy Isle, in a vessel guided by an angel,

'Through wintry winds and billows dark,'

and was inhospitably repelled. This lady, it appears, was no less charming a person than St. Cannara of Bantry, a celebrated beauty in her day; but Senanus adhering literally to the stern doctrine of St. Augustin, that even angels are not to be loved, to prevent all chance of such a result, most rudely refused the visit of the pious sister.

Our author here enters minutely into the personal character of the saint, passing over all which, we proceed to the Island of Scatterry, where he took up his abode; and here we are informed that—no fewer than eleven churches are recorded to have been built upon Inniscattery by its patron saint, who is stated to have died there on the 1st of March, 544. The word *church*, however, thirteen hundred years ago, and even some centuries after, had a very different meaning, as applied to a building, from the import of the word at present. It was in fact a mere cell, hermitage, sanctuary, or even grave, as the name *ceil* or *cill*, which corresponds with the Latin *cella*, imports, and which in the form of *kil* is to be found so fearfully compounded in Irish local names, that perhaps no better motto could be found for Holbein's 'Dance of Death,' than Pat's well known speech of 'I've been at Kilmaly, and I'm going to Kilmore.'

Connected with the former sanctity of Inniscattery, the most remarkable object at present is the Round Tower. We have used the word 'remarkable' advisedly; for this tower is an important landmark in the navigation of the Shannon, and it is also probably the most ancient building upon the island. It is said to measure one hundred and twenty feet in height, and springs from a base twenty-two feet in circumference. Although scathed and rent by lightning, the original roof remains. While its fellow pillar-towers, as at Kildare and Cloyne, have been compelled to assume embattlements, that of Inniscattery retains its primitive covering, and stands proudly crowned with that barrad, or conical cap, which, according to Walker, the national architects and sculptors of Ireland regarded as a dress becoming even to angels.

Although it has been asserted that eleven churches were built upon the island by Senanus, the remains of seven churches or cells only are now to be traced; from a glance at which it is evident to the eye of the architectural antiquary, that the date of the building of three of these ruins, must have been long subsequent to the days of the ungallant saint. 'The cathedral, St. Mary's church, and one other,' observes a modern pilgrim to Scatterry, 'are in pointed style, but possess no particular attraction. The neighbourhood of the latter is used as a burying ground, and the interior of the cathedral has been cleared away, and converted by the irreverent islanders into a ball-alley. Three more ancient structures, one of them called Simon's own, stand to the northwest of the cathedral, the largest of which is but twenty-two feet long, and the smallest twelve, and of proportionate breadth. *Teampul an eird*, i. e. the church on the height, is of similar dimensions, and equally unadorned. The light was admitted into each of these Lilliputian temples by one or two very small windows, little superior to loop-holes, so narrow, that when entirely open, we must be struck with surprise, how the light which they admitted could have sufficed.' "

was made with so much vigour and resolution, and the action conducted with so much military skill by the Irish general, that the Danes were entirely routed, with the loss of eight hundred men and three of their chief commanders. These two defeats were productive of some happy consequences to the natives: for the Danes, having lost their principal officers and the greatest part of their forces, became exceedingly humble, apprehensive that the Irish, seeing so few of them remaining, might, for the purpose of exterminating their enemies, doom them to destruction, before they had procured a fresh supply from Norway. This apprehension induced them to cease from all hostility and oppression, and the natives began to enjoy a state of freedom and tranquillity, to which they had been strangers for some years. It was, however, a temporary tranquillity; for the Danes received a reinforcement which encouraged them to return to their former violence and rapine. The Irish had so much experience of the treachery of these people, that, in the intervals of peace, they were obliged to be upon their guard, lest their security should prove their ruin; and they soon saw the good effects of their vigilance and precaution. At a celebrated fair of Roscrea,* at this time, when it was supposed all their attention would be engaged, a very formidable body of the Danish army made a stolen march in order to surprise them, and carry off all the goods and merchandize exhibited on that occasion. But the natives were prudently provided with arms to defend their property in case it should be attacked; and having received intelligence that the Danes were on their march against them, they unanimously quitted the fair to meet the enemy: and though they had neither skill nor opportunity to draw up in a regular order," yet the Irish, animated with the desire of revenge, gallantly resolved to repel their treacherous assailants or die in the brave attempt. Thus determined they made an overwhelming charge on the Danes which broke their ranks, and spread death and dismay through their whole force. Such was the success of the Irish in the conflict, that the Danes, before they commenced their flight, left 4,000 of their killed on the field of battle. This memorable engagement, in which Irish valour won so much glory, and achieved so signal a victory,—although the victors, let it be remembered, were composed of merchants, traders and farmers, uninured to arms, who were attacked, unexpectedly, at a public fair,

* ROSCREA is a large and populous town, situated in the county of Tipperary, at the distance of 75 English miles from Dublin. The description of its magnificent round tower, we extract from the first volume of the *Anthologia Hibernica*, one of the most interesting magazines that was ever published in Ireland. "The round tower," says the writer, "is 80 feet high, and 15 in diameter, with two steps round it at the bottom. At fifteen feet from the ground is a window with a regular arch; and at an equal height is another window with a pointed arch." In A. D. 1213, King John built a castle in Roscrea. Mulrony O'Carroll, styled King of Munster, in the year 1490, founded a Franciscan friary here. The town is surrounded by a very fertile tract of country. Mr. Seward, the author of "*Topographia Hibernica*," writes of its church thus:—"The church is very old—the front consists of a door and two flat niches, on either side, of Saxon architecture, with a mezzo relievo of the patron saint, much defaced by time. At a little distance is a cross, in a circle, with a crucifix on one side, adjoining which is a stone carved in various figures, and on each end a mezzo relievo of a saint, which is called the shrine of St. Cronan."

by an army of veteran soldiers, is an eminent instance of what a band of heroic men, where united in purpose, and connected by a patriotic sympathy, can perform and effect in defending their lives and liberties. The people of Connaught, now pressed down by Danish tyranny, and groaning in slavery, began, at length, to emulate the spirit and resolution of their fellow countrymen in the south, and rousing from the sleep of their inglorious apathy, they mustered all their forces, and after a succession of hard-fought battles, they finally succeeded in driving the rapacious invaders out of their province. About this juncture, A. D. 945, we are informed by some of our historians, that Roderick, prince of Wales, made a descent on the south eastern coast of Ireland; but he and his soldiers were compelled by the natives to abandon the country and to seek safety in their ships.

The splendid victories of Brian Boroihme over the Danes, instead of gaining for him the admiration of his contemporary princes, excited, on the contrary, in their breasts, the ungenerous feelings of envy and jealousy.* Amongst those who were actuated by this unworthy passion, was Donald, the king of the Deasies, who had the temerity to invade Brian's dominions, and to commence there all the ravages and devastations with which fire and sword could visit a country. Brian, enraged at the invasion of his territories, quickly took the field and defeated Donald's forces, among which there was a large army of mercenary Danes, and obliged the king of the Deasies, with the shattered remains of his troops, to commence a disastrous retreat towards the city of Waterford, to which place they were rapidly pursued by the victorious Brian, who came up to them before they had time to enter the gates, attacked them furiously, and put the greater part to the sword. The king of the Deasies fell, as he should have, amongst the slain. Brian carried off an immense quantity of booty from Waterford, where the Danes had collected all their spoils and treasures. Brian's popularity and fame now ascended to the very zenith of glory, and all the petty princes of Ireland feared and hated him. Every day and every act of his reign developed the superiority of his martial and legislative talents, and proved that he was richly endowed with all the mental and personal qualities requisite in the formation of the noblest character of a magnanimous and patriotic king. Brave, resolute and accomplished, he seemed to have been destined by nature, to command in battle, and to wield a monarchical sceptre. The higher his reputation rose in arms, the more he became endeared to the soldiers and people, who were dazzled by the splendour of his exploits, and the nobleness of his sentiments. Considering his sphere of action, he might, perhaps, be almost ranked, in character, with Cæsar or Napoleon. As a king, a leader, a legislator, a philosopher, on each of which spheres his talents shed lustre, he displayed a capacity and a rare union of virtues, admirably fitted to give eminence and consequence to any of these exalted stations. Brian, at the head of the

* BRIAN got the surname of *Boroihme* from the vast number of cows that were sent to him in tribute; because *Bo* is the plural designation of cows, and *roihme*, in Irish, the soil, which, when compounded, signifies the cows of the soil or earth.

Dalgais or *Dalcas*,* performed many prodiges of gallantry and greatness. Having vanquished all his enemies, he returned to his palace to cultivate the arts of peace. With the parental solicitude for his people, of a good king, he enacted wise, impartial and just laws to govern them. The tribunals of justice were filled with upright, discreet and competent judges, so that the laws were equally and impartially administered.† In obedience to his orders, houses of hospitality were opened for the entertainment of strangers, and the lands originally appropriated to them in the counties of Cavan, Monaghan, Louth and Fermanagh, restored. He caused the ruined abbeys and churches to be repaired, and extensive and numerous colleges to be erected and endowed for the instruction of the youth of his kingdom,—in fine, prosperity, beneficence and education were the bright and beneficial emanations that flowed from his liberal, enlarged and enlightened policy. Besides the improvements which he made for the benefit of his subjects, in the civil and judicial institutions of the country, and the impelling impulse that his munificence and patronage gave to the arts and sciences, he supported the grandeur of the royal dignity in a splendid style. The several regal palaces of Munster, he caused to be enlarged and beautified with all the embellishments and decorations which architecture, painting and sculpture could bestow, in order that they might afford suitable accommodations for his own residence, as well as for the becoming reception of foreign princes and ambassadors visiting him at his courts. In this manner did the good and generous monarch distinguish the glory and happiness of his auspicious reign, by making his people participate in the blessings and benefits of the peace and prosperity of which it was the centre and source. Brian now claimed the sovereignty of the two Munsters, and he soon compelled the people of both states to swear allegiance and pay tribute to him. At this era, 968, the king of Leinster refusing to pay to Brian the tribute which he had promised, the king of Munster, in consequence, invaded Leinster. The king of Leinster, at the head of a formidable army of his own subjects and his Danish auxiliaries, advanced to the frontiers to oppose the powerful invader. The belligerents, on approaching each other, commenced battle. Both parties struggled bravely for victory; but Brian's superior generalship, and the heroic valour of his army, gained the fortune of the day, and the

* The DALGAIS, so called from being the personal guard of King Cormac Cas, (or the belved) who was king of Munster in the year A. D. 223. Like the imperial guards of Napoleon, their ranks were filled only with gentlemen of valour and respectable birth. They were proverbial as the very champions of heroism and courage.

† DR. WARNER, the English Historian of Ireland, in passing a deserved encomium on the character of Brian, says—"The people were inspired with such a spirit of honour, virtue and religion, by the great example of Brian, and by his excellent administration, that as a proof of it, we are informed that a young lady of great beauty, adorned with jewels and a costly dress, undertook a journey alone from one end of the kingdom to the other, with a wand only in her hand, at the top of which was a ring of exceeding great value;—and such an impression had the laws and government of this monarch made on the minds of the people, that no attempt was made upon her honour, nor was she robbed of her clothes or jewels." On this incident MOORE has composed one of his finest and most interesting melodies—entitled "*Rich and rare were the gems she wore.*"

king of Leinster was put to flight after losing five thousand of his best troops in the engagement. The victorious Brian pursued the Danes to Dublin, where to evade his vengeance, they shut themselves up in their fortresses. The king of Leinster had not only to pay the tribute but to submit to such terms as the conqueror thought proper to prescribe. Brian, flushed with victory, and enriched with the spoils of conquest, accompanied by his troops, returned in triumph to his palace at Kincora,* in the county of Clare.

The extensive conquests of Brian now yielded him an immense revenue. Dr. O'Halloran, in his history, enumerates and specifies them as follows:—"According to the *Leabar na' Ceart*, (the Book of Rights) Brian's annual revenues, as king of the two Munsters, consisted of 66,400 oxen, 8,000 cows, 5,800 sheep, 6,000 hogs, 5,000 lambs; the like number of calves; 5,000 common, 200 green, and 60 scarlet cloaks; 520 tons of iron: moreover, the annual revenues of Limerick were 365 tons of claret; of Waterford 400 tons; and the like quantity from Cork; besides spices, cloths and silks from each of these cities." Congall, the monarch of Ireland, envying Brian's conquest and glory, conceived such feelings of jealousy and enmity against him, that he marched with his army into Munster; but he had not proceeded far before he met Brian, who attacked him, and reduced him to the necessity of seeking his safety in an inglorious flight back to his own territories. "No historical records," writes McDermott, "relative to this contest, are in existence; and indeed all other accounts of this reign are very scanty. Some mention is made of the great successes of the Danes under the command of Godfrey, the son of Sitrick—of their confederacy with the Irish in the province of Leinster—of their plundering the churches and religious houses, and of their carrying away three thousand Irish prisoners, besides gold, silver, and other booty to an immense value. Congall having, after being defeated by Brian, marched his army to Armagh to put a stop to these depredations, was, after a reign of twelve years, slain in a battle with the Danes and their unnatural allies, the troops of Leinster, who obtained the victory." The Irish throne becoming vacant by the death of Congall, Donald O'Neil, a prince of the Heremonian dynasty, was elected to fill it, in the year 965. Donald had not long possessed the sceptre before he invaded Connaught, to avenge some quarrel which occurred between him and the prince of that province, previous to his elevation to the Irish monarchy, the cause of which is not explained. The king of Connaught not being able to oppose a vigorous resistance to the monarch, could not prevent the invader from devastating his province, or from carrying off vast spoils, and a great number of prisoners.

We will conclude this chapter by quoting from McDermott's History of Ireland.

"The Danes who inhabited Dublin made incursions into the

* We have searched in vain in several topographies of Ireland, in order, according to our plan of giving "a local habitation" to every place in Ireland, to which we may have occasion to allude in this history; but we could not, in any of them, find any mention or description of *Kincora*, in Clare.

county of Kildare, which they plundered under the command of Amelanus, their general. But these foreign enemies were not always successful: the Mamonians, under Brian, their king, attacked the Danes who inhabited Limerick, defeated them, and set the place on fire. The king of Ulster also, provoked with the Lagenians for their unnatural confederacy with the common enemy against their country, raised a formidable army among his subjects, and having marched with it into Leinster, plundered all the province from the barrow eastward to the sea. Here he encamped for two months, and withstood the united efforts of the Danes and Lagenians to dislodge and make him retire.

Notwithstanding the opposition they met with, and the discomfitures which they so often experienced, the Danes still continued their ravages in many parts of the island. Donald was at length induced to attack those who inhabited the city of Dublin, and their unworthy associates, the Lagenians; which occasioned a most desperate, sanguinary battle at Kilmainham;* so great was the slaughter on both sides, especially among the chiefs, that the victory is ascribed to neither. About the same time, Brian, the patriotic king of Munster, engaged the Danes of Inis-Cathy, eight hundred of whom he put to the sword, and routed all the rest.

* KILMAINHAM, long famous for being the seat of the Danish and English governments in Ireland, (it was occupied by the latter until after the completion of the Dublin castle) is situated on an eminence encircled in a grove of ancient and stately elms, near the left bank of the Liffey. A magnificent priory was founded here, in A. D. 1174, for hospitalers of St. John of Jerusalem, by Strongbow, earl of Pembroke. The royal hospital of Kilmainham was erected by order of Charles II. "for such officers and soldiers of his Majesty's army," says the charter, in Ireland, as are, or may become, unfit for service, by reason of age, wounds, or other infirmities." The merit of suggesting the plan of that praiseworthy establishment, is attributed to the Earl of Granard; but the honour of carrying it into effect, history assigns to the Duke of Ormond. It was finished in the year 1683, after the sum of nearly £24,000 had been expended on its erection. The fabric, which is very spacious, resembles in its architectural mass and details, the hospital of Chelsea. "The structure, writes Brewer, "forms a rectangle 306 feet by 283, and encloses an area of 210 feet square. Three of the fronts presented to view by this form of ground-plan, are composed of brick, and are plain, but regular, comprising three stories. The principal front is built of rough stone, and is lighted by twelve large circular-headed windows. In the centre of this front is the great entrance, ornamented with an angular pediment, supported by four Corinthian pilasters. From the central part of the same front arises a clock-turret, of two stories, surmounted with an octagonal spire of no great height or beauty." The number of in-pensioners in the hospital, or, as they are locally and properly designated, "old men," is always 300, who are comfortably lodged and fed. Dependent also on the allowance of the establishment, are about 3,000 out-pensioners, each of whom is paid an annual sum proportionate to the term of his service in the army. The dining hall is large and lofty, being 100 feet in length and 50 in breadth. The walls are covered with portraits of English sovereigns, and tastefully ornamented with arms and military trophies. Attached to the hospital is a spacious chapel which stands on the site of the ancient abbey. The hospital is approached from Dublin by a fine military road, at the beginning of which is a superb towered gateway which was designed by the late Francis Johnston, Esq., in the ancient style of military architecture. The court-house, where the sessions for the county are held, and the knights of the shire elected, is a stately and elegant Ionic structure of much architectural grandeur. The prison, the largest in Ireland, resembles a fortress more than a gaol, as it is a rectangular building of 283 feet by 190, enclosed by a thick and lofty wall. It was here the Danes, for centuries, held their strongest hold.

Strange and unnatural as it may seem for a man of a sacred function to assist the avowed enemies of his country, and endeavour to bring his countrymen under their yoke, yet Cionnath, the primate, so far forgot his religion and himself, that he absolutely aided the Danes at Dublin, in their hostilities against the Irish.* It is impossible to say what provocations could have induced him to act a part so unworthy of his character; but let them be what they might, they could not justify his conduct. The people of Leinster, who had suffered considerably through their base confederacy with the enemy, now became weary of the vassalage in which they were held, and taking advantage of the great slaughter which was made of the Danes in the action between them and the monarch of Ireland, refused any longer to be their auxiliaries. The Danes, who had been accustomed to great submission from them, were so incensed at this refusal, that with the assistance of Cionnath, they made war upon the provincial troops, and the chief of Leinster was killed in the engagement. Even though these Danes were of the number of those converted to the faith, it could be no excuse for the primate. But another extraordinary circumstance occurred at this period: soon after his victory over the Danes, Donald, the monarch, abdicated his throne, and terminated his days in the convent at Armagh. That a king should quit his throne, and, in a time of imminent danger, leave his subjects, whom he was bound to defend against their enemies, to put on the habit of a monk, and shut himself up in a convent, is an instance that can only be paralleled by that of a primate turning his crosier into a sword in favour of those whom he was bound by every tie to oppose.

On the abdication of Donald, Malachy, the Second, was elected monarch of Ireland. This Malachy is by Ware called his son, for which there is no authority; and by Keating he is stated to be the son of the monarch Flan, which appears to be another mistake, as Flan had at that time been dead above sixty years. Lynch and the 'Book of Reigns,' also style him the son of Donald, but this is explained by O'Flaherty, who accounts for the mistakes of Ware and Keating, by informing us that Malachy was the son of another Donald, who was the son of Donough, the monarch, and therefore the grandson of Flan. It is certain that Malachy, the Second, was of the Heremonian line, and during the first years of his reign he proved himself worthy of his high descent, by opposing the enemies of his country with consummate valour and activity. The battle of Tara, which he fought against the Danes of Dublin, and the sons of Humphrey, one of the generals whom Brian had taken prisoner, in

* DR. O'HALLORAN, in alluding to the above related circumstance, says, "Keating tells us that the Danes of Dublin, by the aid of *Cionnath O'Hartegan*, primate of Armagh, took Ugaire, prince of Leinster, prisoner; but I have not found in the catalogue of archbishops of that see, or of Dublin, and cannot find one prelate of such a name in that century; so if the alleged fact be admitted, he must have been some clergyman of inferior rank." We think the opinion of Dr. O'Halloran is founded in reason and fact, because no such name as *Cionnath*, can be found in any history, extant, of the Irish bishops. It does not appear in the accounts which Archbishop Usher, and Sir James Ware, have given to us of the arch prelates of Armagh and Dublin.

which five thousand were slain, makes a principal figure in the annals of his reign. This action was soon succeeded by the siege of Dublin. Encouraged by his success at the battle of Tara, the monarch of Ireland made an alliance with the king of Ulster, by which they agreed to join their forces and attack the city of Dublin; the place of refuge for the Danes, to which they retired upon a defeat, and where they received their supplies from Norway. All the necessary preparations for a siege having been made, the allied army, which was numerous and well disciplined, appeared before the walls. As they were without cannon, bombs, mortar, and the other implements which modern times have invented, the siege of a fortified city depended a great deal more on courage and activity, than on skill and perseverance. Accordingly when the allied army were three days entrenched, a general assault was made; and in proportion to the violence of the attack was the slaughter which on both sides ensued. The impetuous Irish at length prevailed; their standard was fixed upon the ramparts, and the Danes having made way, they entered the city sword in hand. The violence usual on those occasions was now restrained; the conquerors were contented with their victory and the plunder which it afforded, without putting the wretched inhabitants to the sword. All the Irish prisoners, among whom were the king of Leinster, his children, and several hostages of the first rank, who had suffered a long and severe captivity, were immediately liberated, and the principal Danish officers confined in their places. The Danes by this conquest were reduced to extreme difficulties, and were obliged to submit to whatever conditions the monarch of Ireland thought fit to impose. No doubt these conditions were deemed very hard by the Danes, and probably were accepted with a determination of breaking them as soon as they had it in their power. These conditions were to quit all their conquests from the Shannon to the sea eastwards; to refrain from all hostilities and incursions under the penalty of being cut to pieces without quarter; and to submit to the payment of a large tribute. The Danes were willing at all events to save their lives, and their possession of the city of Dublin, and therefore were ready to agree to any terms of peace which Malachy might propose. But as soon as they had recovered themselves by abundant supplies of every kind from Norway, and deemed themselves upon an equal footing of strength with the Irish, they renewed their arbitrary practices, and in spite of the treaty which they had agreed to, attempted to recover their former settlements and sway in the island. This brought on a rencounter between them and the monarch of Ireland, in which Malachy defeated two of their champions, whom he attacked successively, taking from the neck of the first a collar of gold, and carrying off the sword of the other as trophies of his victory.

The Danes, however, were so incensed at the hard conditions which the Irish had imposed, that when they received further reinforcements, they exerted themselves with redoubled fury, and the natives were in danger of being again reduced to a state of slavery. The monarch of Ireland had at this time devoted himself to indo-

lence and pleasure, so that the welfare of his country was sacrificed to his love of ease and luxury. All the provincial kings, except the king of Munster, appeared wholly indifferent about the public welfare. Brian was continually at the head of his brave Mamonians, chasing and harassing the enemies of his country from one end of the island to the other. Malachy, however, was not so addicted to a life of ease and pleasure, but that he could indulge a spirit of animosity against his countrymen, and carry hostilities into Munster, for the sake of gratifying some spleen which he had against the tribe of the Dalgais. He seized an opportunity while the king of Munster was assisting the province of Connaught with his army against the Danes, to make this incursion: but, as soon as Brian was informed of it, he marched back with all speed to the rescue of his country, which Malachy quitted on his approach, and returned to his indolent habits. This animosity was remembered by Brian, when the monarch who indulged it, thought it was forgotten.

The remainder of Malachy's life was so inactive, and the popularity of Brian was so great on account of his successful exertions against the Danes, it is no wonder that the former should lose the affections of his people, and the latter acquire all their esteem. A striking proof of this was immediately given, for the natives began to form the design of deposing Malachy and of conferring the sovereignty on Brian, to whose protection they owed their lives and liberties. If the people in general were inclined to transfer the honour to the king of Munster, there is no doubt but that his own subjects, who had great cause to love him, would use all their exertions to promote it. They saw a fair opportunity of advancing their hero to the monarchy of the kingdom; and they were glad to have it in their power to prove their gratitude for his excellent administration. But as it might seem to be rather the effect of partiality in them, than of merit in their king, if the people of this province should stand alone in the design of raising him to the monarchy of Ireland, they represented to the nobility and gentry of Connaught, the distressed state of the island under the government of Malachy; and how much more miserable it would have been through the ravages of the Danes, if Brian Boroihme, their king, had not stood up a champion for the common cause, and singly with his Mamonians opposed the continual encroachments of their enemies: they therefore requested that the chiefs of Connaught would join with them in the resolution of deposing the monarch, and setting the king of Munster on his throne. The chiefs of the two provinces having agreed to the proposition, met in council to deliberate on the manner in which they should proceed; for as the deposition of a monarch, any otherwise than in battle, or by assassination, and one by banishment, was a thing unknown in Ireland, it required some consideration to effect it with success and quietness. They at length determined to send an embassy to Malachy, and politely request his resignation of the crown; but, in case of refusal, to adopt compulsory measures. They accordingly sent ambassadors of the first rank, who, in pursuance of the resolution of the chiefs, signified to the monarch, that as he neglected the protection of his subjects,

and tamely permitted their oppression by the Danes, he was unworthy of his exalted situation—that a king of Ireland, who had the happiness of his country at heart, would never suffer the ravages of those rapacious enemies to pass with impunity—that Brian Boroihme, the renowned king of Munster, had alone undertaken the cause of Irish liberty, and therefore that he alone was deserving of the crown of Ireland, who possessed both the inclination and ability to defend it with honour to himself and with success to the nation. In short, the ambassadors informed Malachy that the chiefs of the two provinces whom they represented, were determined to dethrone him; and therefore they hoped, for the sake of public tranquillity, he would cheerfully accede to their wishes, and resign the crown without any apparent reluctance.

Notwithstanding the monarch of Ireland had been for several years past, addicted to a life of ease and dissipation, yet he was naturally of a martial disposition, till thoughtless indulgence had enervated his enterprising spirit: and it is no wonder that he should shake off some of his indolence on being thus addressed—it is no wonder that his ardour should revive, and his indignation glow on receiving this embassy; that he should peremptorily refuse to deliver up his crown, and express a bold determination to defend his right to the last extremity.”

The import of this message roused him from his inglorious apathy, and kindled again the warlike spirit which beamed out so brilliantly at the battle of Tara, and the capture of Dublin. Like a Phœnix, rising with renewed vigour from the ashes of his indolence and effeminacy, he quickly made the necessary preparations for maintaining the inviolability of his crown.

“Hitherto,” continues McDermott, “the king of Munster had not appeared to have any hand in dethroning Malachy, but seems to have waited with expectation that his Mamonians would have been able to have placed the crown of Ireland on his head without any commotion. Had it been thus accomplished it would not only have lessened the envy, and perhaps prevented the opposition of other competitors for the monarchy, but it would also have abated the odium of Brian’s usurpation, who was of the Heberian line, and consequently of his infringing that constitution which had been preserved inviolate for many ages. But when on the return of the ambassadors the king of Munster was assured that nothing could be expected from Malachy without force, he laid aside all reserve; and, availing himself of the popularity which he had acquired among the natives, was determined, with their assistance, to make the crown of Ireland his own. He therefore raised a formidable army, not only of his own province, but in other parts of the southern half of the kingdom, of which he claimed the government; and even took those Danes into his pay whom he had subdued, and who had promised homage and subjection to him. When all these forces were assembled, he put himself at the head of his veteran Dalgais, and marched directly to Tara: but before he began any hostilities, he sent a herald to Malachy to demand his resignation of the monarchy—to bring hostages of the first quality for the security of his obedience, and, in case of refusal, to declare war against him.

Though the monarch of Ireland could not have been ignorant of the great army which the king of Munster had collected, yet he made no preparations whatever to oppose them ; his answer therefore was, that as his army was separated, he was in no condition at present to give battle ; but if the king of Munster would suspend hostilities for a month, in order to enable him to collect his forces, he would then accept the challenge ; or if his subjects refused to support him with their assistance, he would send hostages to Brian at the expiration of that period, for his resignation of the crown, and for his own obedience to him as the lawful monarch. In the mean time Malachy requested, as a favour, that the country of Meath might not be plundered, and that the Mamonians might continue quiet in their camp at Tara. The king of Munster was too generous an enemy not to accept of these conditions ; and his obedient army, though eager for the action, were restrained without any difficulty, from raising contributions on the country.

It is supposed as the monarch of Ireland had made no preparations for his defence, that he was either deceived by false intelligence of Brian's army, or that he did not suspect it had been raised against himself. But neither of these suppositions are probable, particularly the latter. Malachy was evidently determined not to resign his crown without, at least, the appearance of being compelled thereto, and he trusted to the conduct of the enemy for the chance of still retaining it. Having thus gained time, he despatched messengers to the chiefs and nobility of Leath Con, or the northern half of the kingdom, soliciting their assistance and advice upon this momentous occasion. He sent particularly to the famous Hugh O'Neil, a prince of the north Hy-Nials, and chief of the territory of Tyrone, of the Heremonian house, to request his proportion of troops to succour him in a battle on which his crown depended ; and, in case of refusal, to insist on his sending some hostages which Malachy might deliver up to Brian as a security for his own obedience, these being the conditions to which he had been obliged to submit for a suspension of hostilities. The same message was sent to the king of Ulster and Connaught ; and the messengers were authorized to say, that if they were unwilling to support him against the army of Munster, his resignation of the crown would be no dishonour to himself, but an everlasting opprobrium to them, whose ancestors had filled the throne of Ireland for many ages, and who refused to assist the lawful monarch in preserving it.

The chiefs of the northern division, however, refused to obey the summons of Malachy, and the kings of Ulster and Connaught also negatived his demand. O'Neil sent him word that when the palace of Tara was possessed by his great ancestors, they knew how to defend and preserve it ; and if Malachy was not able to keep possession of it, he had better relinquish what he was unworthy of ; that he had been too regardless of the lives and prosperity of the natives, whose blood had been wantonly shed ; whose wives and children were starving in the woods ; whose cities, lands and harbours were in the possession of foreign enemies ; whose churches, monasteries and chapels were laid in ashes ; and that Brian Bo-

roihme, like a true patriot and valiant chief, had reduced the common enemy, restored the liberty of the subject, and employed his time and abilities for the public good. It is no wonder then that the affections of the people should be alienated from the monarch of Ireland and transferred to the king of Munster, and if this was not the case, O'Neil declared that he would not oppose the Mamonians, and especially the tribe of the Dalgais, whose virtues he respected, and whose friendship he courted.

When Malachy received O'Neil's answer to his application, he dreaded the consequences of his refusal, and was determined, if possible, to win him over to his interest. He therefore personally addressed O'Neil, and as an argument which he thought would be irresistible, he offered to resign to him his right to Tara and its demesnes, (which had always been appendant to the crown of Ireland) and to secure his posterity in the possession of it. Whether it was in the monarch's power to dismember so valuable an estate, and the ancient palace from the crown, for any longer time than he held the sovereignty of the island, and whether any succeeding monarch would have thought himself bound by such agreement, may be justly doubted, if not denied. O'Neil, however, required time to consider on the subject, and to take the opinion of his chiefs upon a matter of such importance to his family and to the public.

When O'Neil assembled his chiefs, and acquainted them with the motives of Malachy's journey, and the advantageous offers which he made for assistance against Brian, they suspected the integrity of the monarch, and that if he had it in his power to make good those offers, (for it was a matter of doubt with them) that, should he be re-established in his kingdom, he would not be inclined to fulfil them. Thus bewildered they at first advised O'Neil to return a polite answer, but to refuse taking any part in his contention with Brian, as it might be attended with serious consequences. But afterwards, as they imagined they might be able to derive some advantages for themselves from the distress of Malachy, they proposed that if he would deliver up one half of the county of Meath to themselves and their posterity, as well as the lands of Tara to O'Neil and his heirs, in consideration of the dangers they must expose themselves to in engaging in his defence against the Mamonian army, they would immediately prepare themselves for an engagement.

These conditions were of course offered by O'Neil to the monarch of Ireland, who, deeming them too exorbitant and severe, rejected them with indignation and returned home to his court. In this dilemma, he summoned the nobility of the tribe of Colman, who were under his immediate jurisdiction as king of Meath, and representing to them the present state of affairs and the insolent demands of O'Neil and his chiefs, he requested they would advise him how to act, and hoped they would not forsake him at such a critical juncture. Though the tribe of Colman still retained their loyalty to Malachy as their lawful sovereign, yet they had lost all affection for him—though they would not join with Brian, who was a pretender to the crown, yet they would not take up arms for a monarch who

had permitted the enemies of their country to oppress and enslave them without an attempt to redress their grievances. Their advice to Malachy was, that, as it was not in his power to resist the king of Munster's army, he should immediately repair to his camp at Tara, make his submission, and get the best terms he could for the remainder of his life. Had the monarch remained undisturbed in his government, no doubt, this honest tribe would have been truly allegiant and tranquil: but as he tottered on his throne, through his own indiscretion, they deemed it expedient to express their sentiments with candour and sincerity.

Though mortified as Malachy must have been when he received this advice, yet he found himself under the disagreeable necessity of complying with it: and taking with him a guard of twelve hundred horse, he went to Brian Boroilme's camp, where he was received with all the honour due to his rank. Here Malachy related with indignation the treatment which he had met with from Hugh O'Neil and his chiefs; and though being thus abandoned by his allies, he was obliged to resign his crown and dignity, yet he honestly owned to the king of Munster, that it was absolute necessity, and not any want of courage or resolution, which compelled him to abdicate his crown. Keating tells us that Brian was so moved by Malachy's ingenuous declaration of his misfortunes, that he gave him another year to try his friends, and returned with his army to Munster. But this, which has not the air of probability, is contradicted, says Mac Curtin, by the chief antiquary of Ireland, who wrote the life of Brian Boroilme; and he tells us that he was then proclaimed and crowned at Tara, by the unanimous voice of all the chiefs and clergy of the southern division of Ireland, and with the consent of Malachy himself."

Brian now, in virtue of Malachy's abdication, and the election of the states, as the acknowledged and rightful king of Ireland, made his triumphal entry into Tara, accompanied by all the princes in the island, who came to offer their submission to him, as well as by all the nobles and bishops, that attended to give *eclat* and pomp to the ceremony of his coronation.

"After this," says McDermott, "Brian assigned to the deposed monarch his old inheritance as king of Meath; made him a present of two hundred and forty horses, besides gold and silver to his retinue; and the next year went to Athlone,* and received hostages and submission from the kings and chiefs of Connaught and Ulster.

Thus Malachy, the Second, after a quiet reign of three and twenty years, was deposed from the throne of Ireland without any bloodshed, or even the least commotion: and the renowned Brian Boroilme acquired the submission of all the chiefs in the island, and was universally acknowledged by all ranks as monarch of Ireland.

* *ATHLONE*, a town of considerable extent and respectability, is seated on both sides of the river Shannon, part in the county of Roscommon, and part in the county of Westmeath, at the distance of 75 English miles from Dublin. As it was the theatre of several historical occurrences, we must reserve a comprehensive description of it for a future note. The Shannon is spanned here by a superb bridge of several arches.

If they did not in their hearts approve of the expulsion of Malachy, and the interruption of the succession, yet their acquiescence was cheerful and without murmur. Such a revolution is extraordinary; particularly at this time in Ireland, where the monarchy was elective, and where the contests for the crown were extremely violent."

CHAPTER LXIII.

Eminent Irish writers of the ninth and tenth centuries.—Brian's success in suppressing the insurrection of the Irish malcontents, who were aided by the Danes. The valour evinced by Murrough, the crown prince.—The Monarch exerts himself to improve the intellectual and moral condition of his people.—He augments his navy.—Mal-Morda, King of Leinster, his brother-in-law, visits his court.—A quarrel occurs between Prince Murrough and his step-uncle, the King of Leinster; its consequences.—The King of Leinster declares war against Brian.—Malachy, the deposed king, affects friendship for the cause of Brian; his treacherous and hypocritical conduct.—The great battle of Clontarf—defeat of the Danes, and death of the venerable and valiant Brian, and of his heroic son, Prince Murrough. Brian's character.

THE wasting wars and destroying devastations of the Danes opposed a detrimental and material obstruction to the progress of education in Ireland, during the ninth and tenth centuries. Hence the cause which, in these ages, diminished the lustre of Irish genius, and dimmed the glory of that beaming constellation of learned men, whose enriched minds raised monuments of literary light during the two preceding centuries, in every nation of Europe. Notwithstanding the barbarities of the Danes, however, great men emerged, in that disastrous epoch, from the flood of their despotism. To avoid persecution Albin and Clement fled to France, where their extensive erudition and brilliant eloquence soon procured for them the notice and patronage of Charles, the Great. Under the encouragement of the French monarch, Clement, in the ninth century, founded the university of Paris. Albin crossed the Alps, and journeyed to Pavia, where he founded an academy. Clement wrote a series of epistles on rhetoric, and on the agreement of the Evangelists. Albin wrote a learned disquisition on Irish and Latin grammar. "*Lupoldus Behenburgius*," says Sir James Ware, "who lived in A. D. 1340, makes mention of our Clement. '*The French*,' says he, '*may compare with the Romans and Athenians by means of Clement, an Irishman.*'" Claud, who flourished in the same age, became celebrated on the continent for his commentary on the epistles of St. Paul. John Erigena, "a man," says Sir James Ware, "of searching wit and great eloquence, who, from his infancy, applied himself to letters in his own country," holds a fifth rank among the Irish literati. Early in life he made a journey into France, and paid a visit to Heric, the abbot of Auxerre, who became so pleased with his learning and sanctity, that he gave him a letter of recommendation to Charles, the Bald, in one passage of which he says, as Sir James Ware tells us,—"*Why do I speak of Ireland—that whole nation almost despising the danger of the sea, resort to our*

coasts with a numerous train of philosophers, of whom the more famous abdicating their native soil, account themselves happy under your favour, as the servants of the wise Solomon." At the especial solicitation of King Alfred, Erigena came to England, where the king employed him "for many years in the restoration of learning in the university of Oxford." He died at Malmsburg abbey, England, in the year 887. His works in Greek, Latin, Arabic and Chaldaic, were extensive, and some of them were extant in the age of Honorius. In the tenth century King Cormac of Munster, who wrote the celebrated psalter of Cashel, flourished, and contemporary with him was Probus, the author of a life of St. Patrick, and of a commentary on Juvenal. Probus, according to the annals of the four masters, died in the year 920.

Brian's accession to the throne of Ireland took place in the year 1002, in the seventy-sixth year of his age. After gaining possession of the reins of regal power, the pious monarch made a pilgrimage to the cathedral of Armagh, where he humbled himself in prayer and penance, and laid on the altar an offering of twenty ounces of gold. On his return to his palace, which, according to Dr. O'Halloran, was near Killaloe, in the county of Clare, he received intelligence that some petty princes were discontented at his elevation to the monarchy, in consequence of his not being descended from the Heremonian dynasty. Although they had more prudence than to raise the standard of revolt, they yet openly expressed their dislike and disaffection to the new monarch, and boldly refused to recognize him as king of Ireland. Brian, ever prompt in his resolutions, took instant measures to crush the incipient insurrection in its bud. For this purpose, he caused his son, Murrough, at the head of some provincial troops, to march into their territories, and bring them to obedience. The monarch himself proceeded to the districts of the northern malcontents, who, on his approach, submitted, paid him tribute, and delivered into his hands hostages as a security for their future allegiance.

While Brian and his son were employed in suppressing the spirit of disaffection, the Danes were plotting and conspiring to regain their former power in the country. Finding that Brian was far distant, they made an incursion on the coast of Ulster, where they committed many excesses of rapine and tyranny. Another body of these ravagers plundered Cork, and then set fire to the city. A third party of them, in conjunction with their old allies, the Lagenians, penetrated into Meath, where their aggressions and devastations were enormous. But on their retreat from Meath, Prince Murrough fell upon them from an ambuscade, cut the greater part of them to pieces, and captured the Danish chief and his son, whom, for their cruelty, he doomed to a disgraceful death.

The monarch, having now crushed all his foreign and internal foes, devoted his thoughts to the most effectual means of affording all the blessings of peace and prosperity to his people. To secure the devotion and loyalty of the nobles, he confirmed them in all their possessions and privileges. His next act was to summon a synod of the bishops and clergy, in order that the government of every see

should be restored to the bishop who had been ejected by the Danes, if living. He gave the prelates money to expend in the repairs of the churches and abbeys which the Danes had mutilated. New colleges were built and richly endowed by the monarch, and filled with professors eminent for their mental capabilities.*

The Danes being a very commercial and marine people who imported rich and various commodities from foreign countries, Brian, to benefit his people, and to afford the princes and nobles costly dresses and rare luxuries, permitted them to reside and open their warehouses in Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Waterford and Wexford, first obtaining from them security for their allegiance, and the payment of annual tribute. "In order," says Dr. O'HALLORAN, "to prevent confusion, and to preserve and regulate genealogies, he appointed surnames of distinction, assumed from some particular heroic ancestors, to all the several branches of the Milesian race, and to the other principal families in the kingdom; a thing then unknown in Ireland; and, according to the observation of some writers, it was not till this time that surnames began to be ascertained in France, England and Scotland; first among persons of distinction, and afterwards among the inferior classes." To facilitate inland trade and agriculture, he caused bridges to be built over the principal rivers in Ireland, and ordered roads to be made through almost every part of the kingdom. Under such a salutary and benign system of government, the country was now enjoying the beneficial effects of profound peace,—and the expanded intellect of the monarch grasped every means that could prolong their happy continuance. To counteract the designs of the Danes, and resolved to act according to the maxim, "a wise prince in the midst of peace should be ready for war," and to frustrate any future attempt which they might make to disturb the national tranquillity, he kept a standing army in the camps, and placed strong garrisons in the raths and fortresses which the Danes had lately occupied in all parts of the kingdom. He forbade by royal ordinance any Dane holding privilege or citizenship in Ireland, who did not conform in spirit and practice to the Roman Catholic religion. "This condition," observes an Irish historian, "was so well observed by these foreigners, that they not only professed to believe in Christ, and were baptized, but many of them became so learned and exemplary as to be consecrated bishops of the cities which they inhabited, by the Norman archbishops of Canterbury."

Notwithstanding Brian's grandeur, power and riches, he preferred residing in the humble palace of Kincora, where he was born, rather than in one of his other marble mansions on which architecture and

* "In the library of Trinity College, Dublin," says Ware, "there is a manuscript history of Ireland, by McGeohagan, translated from an old book which is said by the author to be compiled from Columcill O'More, and others that were professed Irish chroniclers, which states that 'Brian, observing into what ignorance the kingdom was fallen by the devastations and outrages of the Danes, having assembled all the nobility, bishops, and great men at Cashel, he caused all their history from the time in which it had been left off, to be recorded in the psalter there, which they all signed; copies of which were sent into every province for the use of each provincial king, and no credit was to be given to any other relations of public affairs, than what were contained in those chronicles.'"

sculpture had lavished all their beauties and splendour. "But here," says his biographer, "his court, his retinue, and the sumptuous hospitality of his table, were in all respects becoming the sovereign of Ireland. The astonishing quantity of provisions which was annually sent in by the other three provinces, besides a constant revenue from his own province of Munster, may afford, in some degree, an idea of the magnificence and splendour with which his royal dignity was supported."^{*}

For the purpose of rendering his naval power more formidable, the monarch ordered three new ships of war to be built in the port of Limerick, of the largest dimensions. During this preparation, Brian sent messengers to *Mal-Morda*, king of Leinster, whose sister he had lately espoused, requesting as a favour, that three of the finest and loftiest trees to be found in his kingdom, might be furnished to him to make masts for the new ships. The king of Leinster promptly and cheerfully complied with the solicitation of his brother-in-law. Carpenters, appointed by *Mal-Morda*, surveyed the great wood of *Shillelagh*.[†]

When the trees were brought to Ferns, the royal residence, the king, in order to enhance the presents, signified his intention of accompanying the conveyance of the masts to the court of Brian. On coming near Kincora, a hot dispute arose between the tribes that were appointed to convey the masts, about the point of precedence in approaching the monarch, and in presenting to him the masts. As soon as *Mal-Morda* ascertained the cause of the altercation, he rode up to them, and not only decided which of the tribes should have the honour of first going to the presence of Brian; but in the ardour of his zeal and the warmth of his solicitude, he dismounted from his steed and assisted his favourite tribe to drag on the carriages which bore the masts. While the king was thus toiling, the golden clasp which fastened the collar of his silk mantle, flew off, and was lost. The mantle, which was gorgeously studded with diamonds of the purest water, was a present which Brian had made to him on the day of his marriage with his sister, as a token of regard and friendship. After the masts were presented to the monarch, and the usual ceremonies had been gone through, and the cordial greetings of congratulation and welcome were warmly reciprocated, the king of Leinster retired to the private apartment of his sister, the queen, and informed her of the cause of the loss of

^{*} "It appears evident from his vast income in money, oxen, wines, cloths, &c., that the exchequer revenues of the monarch Brian, were equal to those of any prince in Europe at this day, (1766) being appropriated only to support the splendour of the diadem."—O'HALLORAN.

[†] SHILLELAGH—Once so famous for its extensive forests of gigantic oaks, is the name of a fertile barony in the county of Wicklow, the little capital of which bears the same name, and is distant thirty Irish miles from Dublin. The oak of Shillelagh was, from the twelfth to the fourteenth century, deemed by architects the best in Europe, in consequence of its elastic and durable qualities. When Richard II., in A. D. 1399, rebuilt Westminster Hall, he caused that edifice to be roofed with Shillelagh oak, which roof is still, after the lapse of centuries, sound, unimpaired and solid. Vast quantities of that wood were exported to the continent of Europe. All the ancient sires of the *Titan* oaks of Shillelagh, have fallen from their lofty height like the sons of Coelus, and few and distant are the now dwarfish groves of the once wood-covered Shillelagh.

the clasp, and begged that she might affix another to his mantle, as he wished to wear it at the audience which her husband intended to give, on the following day, to princes and ambassadors. The queen, a woman of a most exalted spirit, although she loved her brother with the sincerest affection of a sister, felt her pride so humbled, and her resentment so incensed, at the acknowledgment of the king of Leinster, that she tauntingly replied to him in these severe terms:—"Oh! my brother, shame be upon you,—your ignoble conduct makes my blood boil with indignation—it severs my affection for you. Then away! from my sight, and know, fallen prince! that it is not for the daughter of a long race of Heremonian monarchs, on whose majesty centuries of glory, greatness and virtue have shed their splendid lustre, to array and deck out in the servile livery of subjection, the pusillanimous representative of her illustrious ancestors, who would sooner die than bend the knee of homage at the footstool of a Heberian conqueror, or offer, like you, the incense of flattery, with craven and sycophantic groups of tributary and vassal kings. The royal blood of Heremon, which warmed with the fire of enthusiastic courage, the bounding hearts of a legion of heroic kings, has become frozen, degenerate and corrupt in your veins;"* and then snatching the mantle from his shoulders, she threw it into the fire. The king, no wonder, appeared like a man struck by a thunderbolt, at this very satirical rebuke from his sister. But though justly maddened with rage and resentment at her unkind and ungracious treatment, he yet suppressed his anger, and refrained, at that time, from making a recriminatory reply. "Probably," says an Irish historian, "*Mal-Morda* began to be ashamed of himself; the remonstrance of his sister might have awakened his pride, and he might have repented of this degeneracy from the spirit of his ancestors." The next day, as the king of Leinster was looking upon a game of chess, in which Prince Murrough and one of his relatives, were engaged, he, no doubt, unfairly and obtrusively, as a stander-by, suggested to the prince's opponent a move which caused Murrough to lose the game. The prince, provoked at the intrusive advice of the king of Leinster, sarcastically remarked,—“If your majesty had given such good opinion at the battle of *Glen-Molaur*, (the plentiful valley in the county of Wicklow) the Danes, *your friends*, would not have suffered so signal a defeat.” *Mal-Morda*, irritated by the keenness of the retort, spiritedly replied in his kindled spirit of resentment—"Sir, if the Danes have been defeated by my advice, I am resolved to put them in a way to regain their lost ground, and to take their full revenge on you, and the old king, your father." "Oh, sir," replied Murrough, "my father and myself have so often conquered foreign enemies, although backed by your majesty's forces, that we are quite ready and willing to meet them again, even if led on by yourself." "The king of Leinster," writes Cummerford, "said no more,—but immediately retired to his chamber; and ruminating upon the indignities which he had received in the court of Brian, from his queen and eldest son, he refused to appear at

* The Queen's sarcastic and withering address to her brother, we have translated from "*O'Shee's Legends and Narrative of Leinster.*"

supper. Apprehensive, however, that Murrough might take an alarm at his refusal, and for the purpose of baffling his revenge, and preventing him of a chance to seize his person, he rose very early on the next morning, and without any ceremony, quitted the monarch's court, fully bent and determined on speedily gratifying his resentment, let the consequences be what they might." As soon as the monarch was informed of the strange and abrupt departure of the king of Leinster from his palace, he made instant inquiry to ascertain the cause of his setting off so unceremoniously, and on learning all the particulars, he expressed himself displeased with the queen and Prince Murrough. He caused an officer to follow the king to invite him to come back to Kincora, for the purpose of giving to him an opportunity of bestowing on his brother-in-law the rich presents which he had intended for his acceptance. But scarcely had the officer, on overtaking Mal-Morda near Killaloe, delivered the message of Brian, than the indignant king struck him violently three times on the head, by one of which blows he fractured his skull. Expostulation or argument could not appease the anger of the enraged king. The officer, after his head had been trepanned by a surgeon, made the best of his way back to his royal master, to whom he related all that had happened. When the household troops heard of the indignity offered to the monarch's messenger, they loudly and indignantly exclaimed against the king of Leinster, and in the glow of their resentment, which was probably fanned by Prince Murrough, entreated of Brian to allow them to pursue, and to bring him back a captive, to answer for the unpardonable insult which he had given. But the prudent monarch, conscious that his queen and son were the first aggressors, and that their treatment of the king of Leinster was not only rudely insolent, but still more aggravated by violating the laws of hospitality, peremptorily refused compliance with their request. Mal-Morda, burning with the desire of revenge, on reaching his palace, instantly summoned a convention of all the chiefs of Leinster, to whom, as soon as they were assembled, he pathetically related in coloured and exaggerated terms of accusation, the ignominious insults and indignities with which he was assailed at Brian's court. They, led away by the combustible feelings, to which the king's touching appeal to their pride and patriotism set fire, unanimously resolved to ally themselves with the Danes, and to collect such a numerous army as would enable them to take ample vengeance on Brian at the very gates of his palace, before he could have placed himself in a posture of defence. "Thus," writes McDermott, "for a mere trifle, the tranquillity of the country was to be again disturbed—for a *button*, we may say, the loss of which had occasioned the bitter invectives of a proud woman, who, advocating the dignity of her illustrious ancestors, worked up her brother to irascible madness, and endangered the life and throne of her husband and monarch." Mal-Morda's application to the Danish chiefs was soon and gladly acceded to,—for his standard was speedily joined, not only by the Danes in Ireland, but by fresh detachments of troops that were shipped from Denmark and Norway to augment his force. The

Danes of course rejoiced at the civil war, as they expected its results would once more give to them the possession of "*a land overflowing with milk and honey.*"

The king of Leinster, perceiving his ranks daily increasing to a formidable aggregate, sent heralds to Kincora, to declare war against Brian, and to challenge him to a battle in the vicinity of Dublin. The monarch, early aware of the great preparations that were made by the king of Leinster, put every measure in practice that could tend to the subversion of the formidable combination which the Lagenians and Danes had organized against the welfare and liberties of Ireland. He proclaimed war against Mal-Morda, and summoned, as monarch of Ireland, all the tributary princes, with their contingents of troops, to his camp. Arrayed under his standard soon appeared the heroic Dalgais, the troops of Connaught with their several princes at their head, and the forces of Ulster, commanded by the brave Sitrick, his nephew, and the army of the Deasies,—the whole forming a combined martial mass of strength, number and power, from which success and victory might be justly anticipated.

Although the veteran monarch was far advanced in years, having now reached the eighty-eighth year of his age, he yet retained the mental faculties in their primitive power, and all the vigour and spirit of a warrior; and his ardent patriotism and love of martial glory, gave a stimulating impulse to his martial genius, and kindled in his heart the animating courage and fire of youth. In the bravery of Prince Murrough, and in his genius and capacity as a general, the whole army had the utmost confidence. Brian led on a well appointed and highly disciplined army, in the beginning of April, A. D. 1014, to Dublin, and encamped near the strong Danish fortress of Kilmainham.

The Danes, dreading the monarch's bravery and generalship, could not be induced to come out of their fortresses in Dublin; but Brian, to compel them to give him battle, broke up his camp, and made a movement with his whole army, to Clontarf,* near to which

* CLONTARF, the glorious Marathon of Ireland, a considerable and pretty village, stands on the margin of the bay, about two miles from the city of Dublin. With the sea before it, and a domained country behind it, few places in the vicinity of the metropolis equal it for rural grace and landscape beauty. "On the edge of the water," writes Brewer, "are numerous small buildings termed the *sheds* of *Clontarf*, which appellation they acquired from the former residence of fishermen, who erected here many wooden fabrics for the purpose of drying fish. Neat dwellings, used as lodging houses, are now interspersed among the relics of those humble sheds; but the most pleasing parts of this retired and agreeable village, are scattered with an unstudied diversity of site, through shaded and rural lanes. Several of the buildings, thus widely placed, are villas of some extent and elegance. Others are cottages of a soft and embellished character, and well adapted to the occupation of persons who seek, on this tranquil shore, a summer residence for the advantage of bathing. The whole district is adorned with sheltering woods; and prospects of considerable beauty are obtained at several points of the green and devious lanes." A monastery was founded at Clontarf, in A. D. 550, and dedicated to St. Congall. In the reign of Henry II. it was converted into a preceptory for knights templars. When Henry VIII. suppressed the Irish abbeys, he made a grant of it to Sir John Rawson, prior of Kilmainham, whom that monarch raised to the dignity of Viscount Clontarf. In consequence of the Rawsons being the warm adherents of Queen Mary, Elizabeth, on her accession, confiscated

the whole Danish fleet was riding at anchor. This ingenious movement had the desired effect ; for the Danes becoming alarmed for the safety of their fleet, marched with celerity out of the city, and advanced towards Brian's camp. A battle now became inevitable. Brian arranged his troops with his accustomed skill, precision and generalship. He ranked his army in three divisions:—the right wing, which took up a position along the west bank of the Liffey as far as the site of the present Carlisle bridge and Sackville street, Dublin, was composed of the royal guards, the Dalgais, and the Meathians, under their King Malachy ; over this division Brian placed, as chief commanders, his eldest son, Prince Murrough, and his younger sons, Tieve, Donald, Connor and Flan. The centre division consisted of the forces of Desmond, of South Munster, and a large phalanx of the western Connacians ; the whole of this division, which was ranked where the town of Clontarf now stands, was commanded by Kian and Donald, two gallant Eugenician princes, relatives of the monarch ; and holding rank as officers under them, were O'Donoghue of Killarney, O'Donovan, lord of Hy-Cairbre, McCarthy, prince of Desmond, O'Dowling, chief of Hy-Connell, O'Keefe of Fermoy, and many other brave and noble youths, whose names and exploits are only to be found in their genealogical history. In this force was also comprehended the troops of O'Carroll, prince of Oriel. The left wing, stationed on the site of Marino,* formed of the troops of Connaught and Ulster, was commanded by the king of Connaught, by Brian's nephew, the prince of Ulster, with his tributary chieftains, the McMahones of Monaghan, the O'Reillys of Cavan, the O'Donnells of Donegal, the O'Hanlons of Armagh, the McGuinises of Down, and the McLoughlins of Tyrone. We extract from Hardiman's *Irish Minstrelsy*, an account of the array of the forces, and their order of battle at Clontarf, as translated from the annals of Innisfallen and Ulster, by MR. JOHN O'DONOVAN, a profound and erudite Irish antiquarian : "The king of Denmark sent his two sons, Carolus-Kanutus and Andreas, at the head of twelve thousand men, who landed safely in Dublin, and were kindly received and refreshed by *Mal-Morda*. Troops now daily poured into the different ports of Leinster, from Sweden, Norway, Normandy, Britain, the Orkneys, and every other northern settlement. The king of Leinster was also indefatigable, not only in raising new levies, but in labouring to detach different princes

their estates, and bestowed the manor and town of Clontarf on Sir Geoffrey Fenton, secretary of state, who was designated by Sir Richard Cox, "a moth in the garments of all the secretaries of his time." The Protestant church of Clontarf stands on the site of St. Congall's monastery. In the vicinity of Clontarf is a large charter school.

* MARINO, the magnificent and picturesque residence of the Earl of Charlemont, is situated in the vicinity of Clontarf. The high minded nobleman, and incorruptible Irish patriot, the celebrated James, Earl of Charlemont, found the site of Marino a wild, in which, it might be said, he opened a paradise of scenic beauty and grandeur, under the two aspects of rural charms and architectural sumptuousness. "The mansion," says Brewer, "contains many apartments, arranged with much classical taste, and enriched with estimable works in painting and sculpture. The demesne comprises about one hundred acres, finely wooded, and elaborately ornamented."

from the interests of their country. Never were such efforts made by the Danes as upon this occasion: the best men were every where pitched upon for this service. Among others, Broder and Anrudh, two Norwegian princes, landed, at the head of one thousand choice troops covered with coats of mail. These, joining their countrymen and the treacherous troops of Leinster, marched to Clontarf, big with the hope that they would be able to vanquish Brian before his son Donough, who, at the head of a large force, was ravaging Leinster, could return from his expedition. The Danes formed themselves into three divisions:—the first consisting of 1,000 northmen, encased in coats of mail, and commanded by Carolus and Anrudh. Under their orders were the Danes of Dublin, headed by Dolat and Conmael. The second division consisted of Lagenians about 9,000 strong, commanded by their king, Mal-Morda, and under him, by several minor princes, such as O'Toole, O'Byrne, and the O'Connors, chiefs of Ophaly, county of Kildare. The third division was formed of the northmen collected from Scotland and the Isle of Man. It was commanded by Loder, earl of the Orkneys, and Broder, admiral of the fleet which had brought the auxiliary northmen to Ireland." Brian viewed the opposing ranks without fear or dismay,—he offered them battle on Palm Sunday, A. D. 1014, which they declined; but on Good Friday, the 23d of April, they signified by their dispositions, that they were ready for the conflict which was to decide the fate of Ireland. Brian felt much grieved that a day of such sacredness and sanctity should be devoted to all the horrors of mortal strife;—but fight he must, no other alternative remained; the interest of his country and the injunction of honour, proclaimed the necessity of the battle. Both armies thus drawn up in battle array, presented a most magnificent and imposing appearance; their shining armour, glittering spears, and waving banners, displayed a grand, gorgeous and splendid spectacle.

Prior to the fatal signal, at the earliest dawn of sunrise, having been given, the good and gallant old monarch, accompanied by his son Murrough, and his grandson Turlogh, rode through the ranks (his horse was led by his equerry) with a crucifix in one hand, and his drawn sword in the other. As he passed through the different troops, he harangued them with great and impressive force of eloquence. He earnestly exhorted them to do their duty, as soldiers, Christians, and Irishmen; and reminded the Dalgais of their many heroic triumphs, under him, in thirty combats. The greater part of the army formed a circle around him, when he addressed them, in general, thus, as we translate from the annals of Innisfallen: "Be not dismayed, my soldiers, because my son Donough is avenging our wrongs in Leinster: he will return victorious, and in the spoils of his conquest you shall share. On your valour rest the hopes of your country, and on what surer foundation can they be built up to reality? Oppression now bends you down to servility,—will you not burst its chains, and rise to the independence of Irish freemen? Your cause is one approved of by heaven,—for it is a cause that claims a heavenly protection. In this day's battle the interposition of that God who can give victory, will be signally

manifested in your favour,—let every heart, then, be the throne of courage and confidence. You know that the Danes are strangers to religion and humanity,—they are, therefore, inflamed with the desire of violating the fairest daughters of this land of beauty,—and of enriching themselves with the spoils of sacrilege and plunder,—for the barbarians have impiously fixed, for their struggle to enslave us, on the very day on which the Redeemer of the world was crucified. Victory they shall not have,—from such brave soldiers as you they can never wrest it, for you fight in defence of honour, liberty and religion,—in defence of the sacred temples of the Deity, and of the sanctuaries, your wives, daughters and sisters. Then consider that such a holy cause must be the cause of God, who will deliver his enemies into your hands.” The whole army received this address with shouts of enthusiastic acclamation. Brian appeared greatly affected, and was proceeding to take his station in the centre of his forces, when all the chiefs interposed, and implored him, on account of his age and infirmity, to retire to his tent from the field of battle, and leave the chief command to the valiant Murrough. He reluctantly yielded to their entreaties. No sooner had the old and patriotic hero withdrawn, than the Irish army, with a united voice, called upon their chiefs to lead them on in the path of glory. A sonorous sound of trumpets and the echoing clangour produced by the simultaneous striking of thousands of swords on shields, announced the coming conflict. The intrepid *Dalcassians*, (so O’Donovan styles them) ever “eager for the fight,” raised the “*sun-burst*” * standard of Fingal, bearing the inscription, VICTORY OR DEATH! and rushed with their wonted courage and enthusiasm to the charge, making death and destruction pave their pathway through the enemy’s ranks. The onset was furious and terrible,—it was the heroic struggle of national revenge to retaliate on the ruthless despotism of foreign barbarians. As soon as the desperate engagement became general, the base and ignoble Malachy, to gratify his secret vengeance against Brian, for having, twelve years before, snatched the supreme sceptre of Ireland out of his feeble hands, seized upon the opportunity thus afforded, of deserting, with his battalions, the position which he had promised to defend, wheeled off to a hill at some distance, where the inglorious traitor remained an idle spectator during the conflict. When Prince Murrough, from his post, espied the treacherous defection of Malachy and his thousand Meathians, he, with great presence of mind, cried out to his courageous Dalgais, “that this was the fortunate moment to cover themselves with immortal glory, as they alone should have the unrivalled honour of cutting off the formidable division of the enemy opposed to them.”

Every chief and every regiment of the Irish army vieing with each other, evinced a valour and heroism worthy of the cause and fame of Ireland. The Danes, it must be confessed, fought with a desperate resolution that required all the genius and valour of the Irish generals to oppose and contravene. Every man stood immovable in his rank until he fell by the sword of his adversary, when his

* The *sun-burst* was the name which Ossian gave to his father’s banner, because on it was emblazoned a brilliant sun emerging from clouds.

place was quickly supplied by another ; and every foot of ground was obstinately contested. Never, in any martial engagement, was there more desperate valour, or more raging indignation brought into action, than in this sanguinary fight,—it was the terrible battle of animosity against animosity,—of furious revenge against furious revenge. The commanders of the contending armies performed prodigies of heroism. The prolonged contest displayed such an equality of bravery and resolution, that victory remained doubtful in the hope of each of the rival armies.

Prince Murrough and his gallant son, Turlogh, fought like invincible giants, in the conflict : they every where left sanguinary traces of their prowess ; the Danish ranks fell before them as forests fall before the annihilating lightnings of the thunder tempest. By their swords fell the Danish princes, Carolus, Sitrick and Conmael. The king of Connaught completely defeated the corps under the king of Leinster, who, with three thousand of his best troops, was slain. About four o'clock in the afternoon, Prince Murrough, determined to conclude the gigantic fight, placed himself at the head of the Dalgais, and then snatching the standard of Fingal, he exclaimed while waving it—“ *before the lapse of one hour this must float either over the tents of the Danish camp, or over my dead body.*” The other chiefs catching the fire of emulation from the heroism of their valiant leader, furiously precipitated themselves on the foe,—no human force could resist the appalling power of this overwhelming charge, which soon spread consternation, panic and carnage through the enemy's legions. The Danes, being thus thrown into confusion, and driven to despair by the fall of their principal chiefs, began to fly in every direction, pursued to their very ships by the victorious Irish, who committed dreadful carnage in their discomfited ranks. Murrough's right hand and arm became now so swollen and disabled by the violent exertion in wielding his sword, that he could not raise them up.

“ A party of Danes, retreating, under Anruth,” writes O'Donovan, “ observing that Prince Murrough and the Irish chiefs retired from the battle more than twice, and after each return seemed to be possessed with double vigour : it was to quench their thirst and cool their hands, swelled from the violent use of the sword and battle axe, in an adjoining well.” As Murrough was returning from this well, accompanied by only his standard bearer, fatigued and exhausted from the great exertion and labour of the day, he was attacked by Anruth ; but the prince, although not able to use his right arm, grasped the Dane with his left hand, and by applying his shoulder and trip, succeeded in prostrating him on the ground, “ where,” writes O'HALLORAN, “ he shook him out of his coat of mail, and pierced his body with his sword, the pummel of which he fixed against his breast, and drove it with the pressure of his body through his heart.” While the prince, in that situation, was bending over his dying foe, the latter snatched from his girdle a short cimetar, and plunged it into the abdomen of the heroic Murrough. A few moments after, and the Danish chief was no more, but the brave Murrough lived until the following morning, when he received all

the rites and consolations of his religion.* Thus terminated the glorious career of Prince Murrough, whose courage and valour, as displayed in numerous battles, will entitle him, like another MARSHAL NEX, to the appellation of the "*bravest of the brave*."† Corcoran, an officer in attendance on the monarch, on seeing the standard of Murrough struck, which indicated the death of the prince, hastened to his master's tent, and implored him to mount his war horse, and make his escape. Brian, rising from his prostration before a crucifix, replied with great dignity, "Do you and my other attendants take horses and fly to Armagh, and communicate my will to the successor of St. Patrick; but as for me, I came here to conquer or to die, and the enemy shall not boast that I fell by inglorious wounds." Broder, with a battalion of Danes, perceiving the monarch's tent unguarded, made a rush towards it. The aged, but still heroic Brian, on seeing them enter, seized his sword, and with one blow dealt to the first Dane that attempted to seize him, he cut off the right and left legs from his knees. Broder then struck the venerable king with his battle axe, on the back of his head, and fractured it; but in spite of the stunning wound, Brian, with all the rage of a dying warrior, by a fortunate stroke, cut off the head of Broder, and killed the third Dane that attacked him, and then calmly resigned himself to death. Thus, in the eighty-eighth year of his age, and the twelfth of his reign, died the great and magnanimous Brian, whose patriotism and valour reached a sublime point of perfection. His career, long and splendid, irradiated his country's martial and literary fame with a halo of glory that will only die with earthly immortality. This illustrious monarch commanded in twenty-nine pitched battles against the Danes, in all of which he was successful, and shared the glory of vanquishing them in twenty severe skirmishes. His remains were entombed in the abbey of Armagh. The victory of Clontarf was a dear bought triumph, for in achieving it the brave monarch, his valiant son Murrough, with two of his brothers, and his grandson Turlogh, his three nephews, and many other chieftains, with 7,000 of the Irish troops, lost their lives. Mostly all our historians agree in estimating the loss of the Danes at 14,000 men, exclusive of their officers. There is no relation in our annals, of the fate that befel Brian's queen, the

* McDERMOTT gives, we know not on what historical authority, quite a different version of the manner of Prince Murrough's death, which we think it right to submit to the consideration of our readers. He writes—"While Prince Murrough was riding through the dead and wounded after the enemy, one of the sons of the king of Denmark, who knew him, implored his assistance, declaring that his wounds were not mortal, and hoping to be indebted to him for his preservation. This magnanimous chief, whose sympathy was equal to his courage, immediately dismounted, and as he was lifting the wounded Dane up, in order to give him succour, the perfidious wretch stabbed him to the heart."

† "According to the Munster book of battles," says a learned Irish antiquarian, "Prince Murrough was buried in the west end of a chapel in the cemetery at Kilmainham. Over his remains was placed a lofty stone cross, of granite, on which his name was written. About forty-five years ago the cross fell from its pedestal. Under its base were found Danish coins, and a fine sword, supposed to be that which the prince used at the battle of Clontarf. This sword is hung up in the hall belonging to the apartments of the commander of the forces, where it remains a highly interesting, though, hitherto, unnoticed memorial."

sister of the king of Leinster, whose pride and petulance stirred up the disastrous war in which her gallant husband and irritable brother perished.

We conclude our account of the battle of Clontarf, by giving to our readers King Malachy's description of it, as translated by O'Donovan. "It is," says the king of Meath, "impossible for human language to describe that mighty conflict,—an angel from heaven only could give a correct idea of the tremendous horrors of that day! We retired to the distance of a fallow field, from the gigantic combatants, the high wind of the spring blowing from them towards us. And we were no longer than half an hour there, when neither of the two armies could discern each other, nor could one know his father or brother, even though he were next to him, unless he could recognize his voice, or know the spot on which he stood, and we were covered all over, both faces, arms, heads, hair and clothes, with red drops of blood, borne from them on the wings of the wind. And should we attempt to assist them, we could not, for our arms were entangled with the locks of their hair which were cut off by their swords, and blown towards us by the wind, so that we were all the time engaged in disentangling our arms, and in wiping away the human blood and horses' foam from our faces. And it was wonderful that those who were in the battle could endure such horror without becoming distracted. They fought from sunrise until the dusk of the evening."

CHAPTER LXIV.

Dismemberment of the victorious army of Clontarf.—Contests between the sons of Brian and the Eugenean princes, for the succession to the throne of Munster.—Treacherous conduct of the King of Ossory to the Dalgais.—Prince Donough's heroic spirit: the consequence.—Restoration of King Malachy II. to the monarchy of Ireland.—Mahon, the son of Cian, restored to the throne of Desmond.—Quarrel between Tiede and Donough: baseness of the Prince of Ely.—Malachy sets fire to Dublin, and reduces the Dunes of Wexford.—His government becomes very unpopular: the rebels punished.—Death of Malachy.—Disputes about the succession of the Irish throne.*

IN a few days after the victory of Clontarf, the surviving chiefs and soldiers that achieved it, agreed to break up their camp, and to return to their respective provinces. The Connacians, under the command of their chiefs, set out for their own country; but before the army of Munster had departed from the vicinity of Dublin, CIAN, son of *Maolmadh*, chieftain of the O'Mahonies of Cork and

* The district of Ely-Carrol comprehended in those days of which we are writing, the present King's county,—an appellation bestowed upon it, A. D. 1557, in honour of Philip II. of Spain, the husband of Queen Mary of England. Philipstown is the capital of the county,—a town that does not present either architectural consequence, or commercial importance. The O'Connors, princes of Offaley, held their court at Dingan castle, near Philipstown, where the ruins of that feudal structure are still to be seen. Philipstown is distant 38 Irish miles S. W. from Dublin.

Kerry, sent an embassy to Tiege and Donough, while on their march from Dublin, asserting his legal claim to the throne of Munster, in right of the will of their common ancestor, King *Olioll Olum*, which document provided that the crown should be possessed, in alternate succession, in after ages, between the posterity of his son Cormoc, and of his grandson Fiacadh. He set forth as another title to the throne of Munster, that he was married to their sister Sabina. The sons of Brian answered, that as the will of Olioll had been often, during preceding centuries, violated, and as their father gained the throne of Munster by the prowess of his sword, that they were determined to maintain the inheritance which their father bequeathed to them—an inheritance belonging to them by two rights—the right of blood, and the right of conquest. “When Donough had dismissed the messenger,” writes McDermott, “with this answer, which he perceived the Mamonians were preparing to resent by arms, he communicated to the tribe of Dalgais the extraordinary demand which the Eugenean prince had made, and the scorn and indignation with which he had treated it. The Dalgassians, who had a double tie upon them to revenge his cause,—their right of sovereignty of the province, won by their own swords, and their adherence to the family of their late beloved king—were no sooner informed of the pretensions of the Eugeneans, than they, one and all, declared they would stand by Donough and Tiege to the last extremity; even though the Eugeneans, with their superior numbers, should attack them in their present helpless situation. The Eugeneans,* however, being resolved to take the advantages they were possessed of, in order to vindicate their right, and to settle the succession in the ancient channels, formed themselves in battle array. When Donough and Tiege saw the Eugeneans stand to their arms, and ready to fall upon them, animated by the loyalty and resolution of their little army, and by the remembrance of the celebrated hero from whom they descended, they commanded that their wounded men should retire to a Danish rath, at a little distance, with a proper guard to protect them, whilst they, with the remainder, should engage the enemy. The wounded men, however, considering that, by this means, their chiefs would be deprived of a third part of their forces, which altogether was not half the number of the Eugeneans, and being determined to act worthy of the gallant tribe to which they belonged, refused their proffered kindness,—filled their wounds with green moss that was just at hand, and, calling for their arms, embodied themselves with their comrades, bravely resolved to share their fate. As soon as the Eugeneans perceived the desperate spirit of the Dalgassians, and probably finding their own soldiers touched with compassion for their brave unhappy countrymen, with whom they had always fought before, under one banner, they declined the unmanly engagement, and contented themselves with marching home by a different route.”

* *Eugeneans* are so called by our historians, from their illustrious ancestor, Eogan, the Great, king of Munster, the father of Olioll, the common progenitor of the dynasties of the Dalgais and Eugeneans. By referring to a preceding chapter of this history, it will be seen that Eogan fell in the battle of *Maiglenua*, King's county, fought between him and “Con of the hundred battles,” A. D. 181.

Cian, finding that neither his own forces, nor those of his ally, Domhnal, prince of Kerry, was ready to engage with courage or zeal in his cause, gave orders to his troops to march to his fortress in the county of Cork. Cian, cherishing feelings of revenge and resentment against his late ally, Domhnal, for not more effectually assisting him in his projected attack on the sons of Brian, declared war against the Kerry prince, and carried fire and sword into his territories. The contending princes came to an engagement in a plain, called by O'Halloran *Magh-Guilledhe*, near Irrelagh,* in the county of Kerry, in which Cian, his two brothers, and three sons, were slain, and his army cut to pieces by the forces of Domhnal. Several of our ancient historians have panegyricized CIAN as one of the greatest statesmen and bravest warriors that the house of Heber ever produced.

As the Dalgassians, under the sons of Brian, were proceeding on their march to the frontiers of Ossory,† they were met at a place called *Dunamase*,‡ by heralds from Fitzpatrick, informing them that unless they sent hostages for a security and pledge, that no hostile act should be committed by them, nor no contributions levied, while passing through his territories, he would, in that case, declare war against them, and oppose with all his might, their farther progress into his dominions. This menacing message from a prince who had been the tributary vassal of their father, exasperated the feelings of the sons of Brian to the highest pitch of choleric rage, who, madened at its insolent audacity, bade the messenger return to his master, and tell him that they and their devoted Dalgais were deter-

* IRRELAGH, famous for its magnificent abbey ruins, is situated near the town of Killarney, county of Kerry. The abbey, now a pile of architectural ruins, was erected by Thady. McCarthy, A. D. 1440, for minorit monks, under the invocation of the Holy Trinity.

† The ancient name of the *Queen's County* was *Osraigii*, or OSSORY, of which district, prior to the English invasion, the *Mac-Giolla-Phadruigs*, (or Fitzpatrick's) and the O'Mores, princes of Leix, were the chief toparchs. "The district originally extended," says Seward, "through the whole country, between the rivers Nore and Suir."

‡ DUNAMASE, which in Irish signifies the fort of the plain, is situated about four miles from Maryborough, the capital of the *Queen's county*. This place is commemorated in Irish and English history as the scene of many bold and bloody exploits. In the beginning of the third century, Lugh-Leagha, brother to Olioll, king of Munster, erected a strong fortress on the rock of Dunamase. On the arrival of the English, this strong hold was garrisoned by the troops of their devoted ally, but the betrayer of his country, Dermot, king of Leinster. When Marshall, the earl of Pembroke, married (A. D. 1216) Isabel, only daughter of Strongbow, by the princess of Leinster, and thereby became possessed of Dunamase, he built a large and magnificent castle on the summit of the lofty rock. This towering and precipitous rock that was quite inaccessible on all sides except the east, which point was fortified by a barbican, was surrounded by a broad and high fosse faced with a ballium whose walls were six feet thick. BREWER, in describing it writes thus:—"This rude castrametation of the Celtic chieftains, frowned contempt on the world below with the same natural and defying security as does the nest of the eagle, except the scath of heaven." Owen Roe O'Neil captured the castle of Dunamase from the Parliamentarians,—but in A. D. 1650, it was retaken by Colonels Huson and Reynolds, two of Cromwell's officers, who blew it up. The rock stands in the midst of a large plain, called the *Great-heath*, and forms a fine feature of the picturesque *antique*, in the domain of Sir John Parnell, to whom it and the adjoining lands now belong. In a note in the second volume of this history, we will say more of Dunamase.

mined to force a passage through Ossory, or perish in the attempt. "Inform the pusillanimous chief," said they, "that we should deem it one of the greatest misfortunes of our whole lives, to be thus exposed to the insults of a base and insignificant chief, who had, in a cowardly manner, declared war against us, when he knew that our army was reduced, and that we had but a little more than a tenth part of the forces with which he was preparing to oppose our march; yet tell the ignoble chieftain that the sons of Brian are not afraid to meet him in the field of battle, where our courage and valour will make up for the great disparity of our numbers, and prove that the Dalgais are still invincible." Donough and Tiege, perceiving the Ossorians advancing towards them, made the necessary dispositions of their little gallant band to receive and resist the enemy's attack. Donough and Tiege, before issuing the signal for the charge, entreated of the wounded men, consisting of a battalion of 800, to retire to an adjoining hill, and remain there during the struggle; but no sooner did the sick and wounded Dalgais hear the command of their princes, than they unanimously declared that they would rather die, like brave men, in the field of battle, than be led as chained captives to the fortress of the king of Ossory; they, therefore, earnestly supplicated their chiefs to allow them to share the same fate with their fellow soldiers. They further suggested to the princes that they should shew, on an occasion being afforded to them, that they would be able to render some effective aid in repelling the foe. "Let you, brave princes," said they, "cause a sufficient number of stakes to be cut down in yonder wood, and driven into the battle ground, between every two of us, to which let us be tied in such a manner as to leave our hands and arms at liberty to wield our weapons." The princes, moved to admiration at the magnanimous request, reluctantly complied with it.* These men, whose illustrious heroism is not, perhaps, to be paralleled in history, were stationed on the field in the manner they had described. When the advanced guards of the Ossorian army, while rushing to the attack, beheld the battle array and desperate resolution of the Dalgais, who were thus ready to devote themselves to destruction, they suddenly halted, and absolutely refused to follow up the charge. Such was the force of compassion and admiration with which the valiant conduct of the Dalgais inspired them, that all the eloquent appeals and powerful persuasions used by the king of Ossory, to impel his troops on in the attack, proved ineffectual and abortive,—so that he was constrained to retreat, unrevenged, into the fortress

* Our matchless poet-patriot, in one of his Irish melodies, entitled "*Remember the glories of Brian the Brave*," alludes, in the following stanza, to the martial greatness of soul, and chivalric heroism displayed by the Dalgais on this occasion, at Dunamase.

"Forget not our wounded companions who stood
In the day of distress by our side;
While the moss of the valley grew red with their blood,
They stirr'd not, but conquer'd and died!
The sun that now blesses our arms with his light,
Saw them fall upon Ossory's plain!
Oh! let him not blush, when he leaves us to-night,
To find that they fell there in vain!"

of Dunamase. After the princes had passed the fortress of Fitzpatrick, on their march homewards, that little minded prince sallied out of his citadel to pursue and harass their rear guards.

In a few weeks after the battle of Clontarf, in May, A. D. 1014, the national estates assembled at Ratoath,* and decreed the restoration of Malachy to the Irish throne. An Irish historian, in reference to this election says, "Malachy, indeed, does not appear, from any thing that has been related, to have been entitled to a restoration to the monarchy: his cruel and unmanly neutrality when he acted as pretended auxiliary to Brian's army, might have been the cause of the heroic veteran's death; for had he done his duty with the forces which he had brought to the field, the Danes might have been, in that case, cut to pieces before they had committed the foul assassination of the gallant and venerable king!" Shortly after the restoration of Malachy, on the arrival of Tieve and Donough in their own country, their nephew, Mahon, son of Cian, claimed their assistance to recover from Domhnal the throne of Desmond. In conformity to Mahon's request, they marched at the head of a large army, into the territory of Domhnal, attacked and defeated his forces, killed his son, Cathal, in battle, and compelled him to yield up the kingdom of Desmond to their nephew, and place in their hands hostages. At this juncture, A. D. 1016, a violent dispute arose between the brothers, Tieve and Donough, about the succession to the throne of Munster.

The rival brothers raised an army and fiercely encountered each other in battle, near Ennis, in the county of Clare,—but after a whole day's conflict neither party could claim a victory. During this unhappy difference, Domhnal made a sudden incursion into Carberry, county of Cork, laid the country waste by his devastations, and slew young Mahon by his own hand. By the remonstrance of the clergy, Tieve and Donough were reconciled, and entered into a treaty of peace and amity, and combined their respective forces to repel Domhnal, their inveterate enemy, who was on his march to invade their hereditary dominions. They attacked him near Limerick, and succeeded not only in defeating his army, but in killing himself and his principal officers. While these intestine broils were dividing the Irish princes, and frittering away the strength which should be employed against the common enemy, the Danes were secretly accumulating a military force, with which they soon assaulted and took possession of Dublin and Wexford. Malachy, on being informed of the rebellion of the Danes, mustered all his troops, and marched to Dublin for the purpose of reducing them to subjection. The Danes refusing to surrender Dublin, on the summons of the monarch, he, in consequence, caused the walls to be scaled, and the city set on fire, and by that means compelled the Danes to submit to such terms as he thought proper to dictate. "Immediately after Malachy had burned the city of Dublin," writes a historian of

* RATOATH, once a place of consequence as the residence of three or four of the Irish monarchs, and the site of a spacious abbey now reduced to a heap of mouldering ruins, is situated in the county of Meath, at the distance of thirteen Irish miles from Dublin. The country which encircles this little town is rich in beautiful and picturesque scenery. Boston, May, 1836.

Ireland, "he marched into Wexford, and upon what provocation, yet remains unknown, destroyed that territory with fire and sword in a most dreadful manner. These people were inhabitants of the province of Leinster; and though they did not first propose the expulsion of Malachy from the throne, yet, as they did not rise in his defence, this indifference, perhaps, excited him to take this bitter revenge." At this epoch, A. D. 1020, Donough and Tieve again quarrelled and came to an open and violent rupture about the crown of Munster, which Brian, before his death, had bequeathed to the latter, who fought gallantly at the battle of Clontarf.

Donough, ambitious of wearing a crown, shut his heart against fraternal affection, and severed the holy ties of nature by conspiring and concerting with O'Carroll, toparch of Ely, in the diabolical and treacherous design of putting his brother Tieve, secretly, to death. The base and wicked plan which they adopted for the unsuspecting prince's death, was, that O'Carroll should inveigle him into his district, under the pretence that the atrocious assassin wished to honour Tieve with hospitality at his court. The iniquitous feint of the sanguinary conspirators succeeded, and the devoted Tieve had scarcely entered Ely when he was assassinated. Donough and O'Carroll, to screen themselves from the imputation of being implicated in the barbarous deed, caused reports to be circulated far and wide, that Tieve was murdered by robbers in the bog of *Clonearl*,* in the Kings county. As degrading wages for the execrable act, Donough rewarded O'Carroll with rich presents, and made his county a palatinate, exempt from tribute. While these events were passing in Munster and Ely, the monarch, Malachy, to avenge some real or imaginary offence, invaded Ulster, and devastated and ravaged the country from Newry to Newtownards,† in the county of Down, and carried off much spoils and many captives. Division and discord prevailed once more over the friendship and harmony

* CLONEARL, situated at the distance of two miles from Philipstown, King's county, presents a wild tract of marshy bog-ground; but which is now studded with numerous cabins full of inhabitants, in consequence of the abundance of fuel which it yields without much labour or expense. The bleak and bare aspect of the gloomy landscape is, however, relieved and animated by the elegant mansion and embellished demesne of WILLIAM MAGAN, Esq., at CROGHAN-HILL,—a prospect commanding eminence which rises, as it were, over the boggy lowlands, like the genius of cultivation, seemingly spinning away the frowning demon of the wild. In the days of Spenser this beautiful and lofty height must have had landscape charms, as he has poetically celebrated it in his *Fairy Queen*.

† NEWTOWNARDS, a fine and flourishing town, is situated on the northwest point of Strangford lough, the largest salt water lake in Ireland, being twenty-one miles in length, and seven in breadth, at the distance of ten miles from Belfast. The town contains many respectable houses, and its inhabitants are remarkable for their industry, intelligence and liberality. The suburbs of the town are picturesque, pretty, handsome and diversified,—Strangford lough, with its numerous green isles, and the extensive and beautiful demesne of Mount Stewart, the country residence of the Marquis of Londonderry, serve to enliven the landscape with contrast of scene, variety of features, and rurality of appearance. The principal edificial ornaments of Newtownards, are the Protestant church and the market house. The mansion of Newtown-Stewart has no claim to architectural taste,—it is a plain and ponderous pile, built in that graceless style of architecture which prevailed in Ireland during the *Gothic* reigns of William and Anne. The abbey, now an interesting heap of ruins, was erected in A. D. 1244, for Dominican monks, by Walter de Bourg, earl of Ulster.

of some of the Irish princes. The king of Ossory invaded the south of Leinster, and carried the terror of fire and sword to the town of Leighlin, county of Carlow, where he entered by night, and not only sacked the town, but forced the palace, and put the king of Leinster and all his nobles and courtiers to the sword. The Leinsterians, enraged and maddened, sent messengers to Malachy, informing him of the atrocious aggression and violent outrage of the prince of Ossory, and imploring from him, as monarch of Ireland, redress and protection.

In accordance with their request, Malachy, no doubt glad of the opportunity of invading the territories of Ossory, speedily marched with his army to the assistance of the oppressed people of Leinster. Uniting his forces with theirs, he rapidly penetrated into Ossory, laying waste in his devastating march the whole country, and committing every licentious excess that could be practiced by a remorseless and despotic conqueror. The king of Ossory, after a long retreat before the superior army of the ruthless invader, at length determined rather to die in the field of honour, than become the chained captive of the monarch, made a stand, and awaited the attack of the invaders at Stradbally,* in the Queen's county, where, after a gallant struggle, he fell with his chief officers and the principal part of his army. The Danes again taking advantage of the unhappy commotions and dissensions that prevailed amongst the Irish princes, privately mustered a little army commanded by Sitrick, with which they made an incursion into the county of Wexford, A. D. 1020, and after plundering several abbeys, they succeeded in capturing the royal palace of Leinster at Ferns, where they put Brian, the son of Maolmorda, the king, and several of his officers to death by the sword. But Ugair, the crown prince of Leinster, eldest son of Brian, having fortunately escaped from the Danes, raised a large army, and attacked the Danes so successfully that their entire forces were annihilated; and such was the decisiveness of their signal defeat, that after that battle they were never again able to offer any opposition to the Irish. "Thus," writes an Irish historian, "was the Danish interest, which had cost so much blood, finally extinguished in this island. This meritorious action did not, however, secure the brave victor-king of Leinster from the malice and animosity of one of his family, by whom his house at Ferns, in the county of Wexford, was treacherously set on fire, and the heroic prince himself perished in the flames!" Malachy, after returning

* STRADBALLY, a beautiful and brisk little town, is pleasantly situated in a valley on a branch of the river Barrow, called the *Straid*, which is crossed by a fine bridge of three arches, in the eastern part of the Queen's county, at the distance of five miles S. E. from Maryborough. The streets are wide, showy, and well paved; and before the houses, on either side, is a row of majestic elm trees which diffuse a pleasing air of ruralty over the aspect of the town. It is surrounded by wood-wreathed hills, and highly cultivated domains.—among the latter of which are those of Stradbally hall, the seat of the Cosby family, the proprietors of the soil, and Brockley park, formerly belonging to the Earl of Roden, whose seat is now at Dundalk, in the county of Louth. A large and magnificent monastery was erected in Stradbally, in the twelfth century, by one of the O'Mores, princes of Leix, who occupied a strong castle here, which stood on the very site now rearing the modern structure of Stradbally hall. Boston, May, 1836.

to his palace in Meath, from the conquest of Ossory, in A. D. 1021, began to devote his thoughts and cares to the pious duties of religion, in which he was assisted by the spiritual administration of *Amalgaid*, the then archbishop of Armagh. The monarch arrived at the venerable age of seventy-three years, and died on the 2d of September, in the year 1022.

If his unpatriotic conduct at the battle of Clontarf had not attached an indelible stigma to his character, which "all great Neptune's ocean," can never wash off, Malachy's bravery in the field, signalized on many occasions, and his legislative wisdom in senate and council, would have been entitled to the most laudatory commendation that an eloquent historian of his country could bestow on his memory. During his second reign, which lasted more than eight years, he endowed and erected several abbeys and colleges; extended patronage to literature and the arts, and evinced a disposition to promote the prosperity of his people. "By these means," says McDermott, "he acquired the character of a sovereign of exemplary goodness and devotion, though, on many occasions, he had displayed much treachery and cruelty." Shortly after Tieve's death, through, as we have shown, the monstrous contrivance of his brother Donough and the prince of Ely, suspicion that Donough was the barbarous perpetrator of the foul and horrid deed, gained every day an ascendancy in the public mind, which was considerably increased by the sudden flight of Turlogh, the son of Tieve, from his paternal uncle's court to that of his maternal uncle, O'Molloy, at Fearcal, in the King's county. Immediately after the death of Malachy, several candidates started in competition for the throne of Ireland; amongst them Donough, who, as the son of the hero Brian, put forth his claims, recommended and supported by the reverence and regard in which the Irish people held the hallowed memory of his illustrious sire. But the misgivings and suspicions that hung over the strange and mysterious death of his brother Tieve, closed the doors of favour and popularity against his election by the estates. A dark cloud of imputation rising out of his brother's death, lowered over his character, which all the efforts of his friends could not dispel. "Finding his own tribe of the Dalgais so much reduced by the late battle of Clontarf that they were incapable of assisting in another contest, and that the wicked step which his mad ambition had suggested for proving a claim to the succession, was the principal cause of preventing the attainment of his wish, he and a few of the Dalgais, in A. D. 1024, who still adhered to him, repaired, as soldiers of fortune, to Germany, where they were kindly entertained by the emperor, Conrad II., who appointed Donough his general against the northern heathens. After a great career, success in that command, and being much honoured by the emperor for it, he returned again to his native land, where he still found a cool reception; the murder of his elder brother not having been yet forgotten by those who regarded the memory of the valiant Brian. By some means or other, however, either by tokens of sincere repentance, or by the vast renown which he had acquired in arms, the inhabitants of his own province were reconciled to him; they submitted to his

government, and assisted him to recover the submission and tribute which had usually been paid by others to the kings of Munster. Having thus established himself in his own province, he boldly asserted his right to the throne of Ireland as the son of Brian. The right of Brian, however, had been acquired by fortune of war and popularity of character,—but the pretension of a son who was far from being popular, had nothing but force and faction to support it. Had Tiege, his eldest brother, been living at this time, to whom Brian left the crown, he would doubtless, for his father's sake, have derived the same right from popularity. By force, however, Donough was enabled to make a show of sovereignty, and assume the title of monarch; and to get himself acknowledged and submitted to as such over all *Leath-Mogha*,* or the southern half of the kingdom, and in the greatest part of the territories of the other half. But in opposition to him a great party was formed by Dermot *Mac-Mal-Nambo*, his nephew, then king of Leinster, in favour of his first cousin, Turlogh, the son of Tiege, who assumed also the title of monarch of Ireland, and was recognized as such by a powerful faction that zealously supported him."

During these contests for the crown of Ireland, the national estates appointed Cuan O'Loughlin, prince of Ulster, and a descendant of Nial, the Great, regent of the kingdom. The two most prominent competitors for the regal power of the Irish monarchy, were, at this time, Donough and his nephew Turlogh, the pretensions of each of whom were zealously sustained by their rival and respective parties. Donough, feeling jealous of the *Clan Colman*, (the relatives of the late King Malachy) made an incursion into Meath,† where he committed the most enormous acts of rapacity and aggression. Enriched with spoils ravaged from the people of that country, and secured by a great number of hostages, he, flushed by success, marched back to Dublin, attacked that city, and compelled its head and notables to acknowledge him as monarch of Ireland. From Dublin he marched to the city of Waterford.‡ At

* *LEATH-MOGHA* and *LEATH-CON*, which in Irish signify the halves, a derivation which arose from Eogan Mogha, king of Munster, and Con of the hundred battles, monarch of Ireland, in the year A. D. 166, making a partition of the kingdom between them, by the terms of which Eogan was to exercise sovereign sway over the southern half of the island, and Con of the northern half.

† *MEATH* is one of the richest and most populous counties in Ireland,—abounding with cattle and corn, and containing a population of 119,580 souls. Of this county we will have occasion to speak more largely in a note to a future chapter.

‡ *WATERFORD* is a fine and populous city, most advantageously situated on the south side of the river *Suir*, about five miles from the juncture of that majestic stream with the Nore and the Barrow, whose conjoined waters form the noble harbour of the city. It is eight miles distant from the sea, but the river, running from it, is so broad and deep that ships of the heaviest burden can sail up to the harbour. Waterford is a place of great commerce and industry, and it has been the scene of many historical incidents, of which we will speak, fully, in a future note. We have already related that St. Carthag, bishop of Lismore, was the founder (A. D. 638,) of the united sees of Waterford and Lismore. The chief edificial ornaments of Waterford, are the Exchange, Cathedral, Bishop's palace, Theatre and Court-house. The magnificent quay of Waterford, nearly half a mile in length, is considered to be unequalled in Europe. The monastic and feudal ruins of Waterford are noble and affecting, even in decay. The priory of St. Leonards still presents beautiful, architectural and sculptural remains. Waterford stands at the distance of ninety-six English miles from Dublin.

this era, the kings of Leinster, Connaught and BREFFENY,* formed an alliance against Donough, and for the purpose of raising his nephew Turlogh to the supreme throne of Ireland. Donough, to secure the power which he obtained by the infamous crime of fratricide, formed an alliance with Harold II., king of England, whose daughter, the princess Driella, he married. Shortly after his union with the English princess, Donough, knowing that he had no hold in the affections of the Irish people, who only sought for an opportunity of shaking off the intolerable yoke of his oppression, garrisoned all the fortresses in his possession, with English mercenaries. In A. D. 1053, Harold visited Ireland for the purpose of obtaining assistance from his son-in-law, to resist the invasion of William, Duke of Normandy. Donough sent three thousand of his best troops to England, whose prowess and valour at the battle of Hastings, are so highly extolled by Holinshed, and other English historians. Turlogh and his uncle Donough, came to battle at Ardagh,† in the year 1063, in which engagement the latter was totally defeated. The result of this battle prostrated the power and the fortunes of Donough. All his former friends now abandoned him,—so that giving up his hopes to despair, he made a formal abdication of the Irish throne in favour of his victorious nephew Turlogh. Donough, with a heart touched with the “compunctious visitings” of remorse, set out on a pilgrimage to Rome, where he assumed a religious habit in the monastery of St. Stephen, and in that retreat terminated his days, in the year 1066. On his introduction to the then Pope Alexander II., he presented to him the crown and harp, and many other rich jewels belonging to the splendid regalia of his great and magnanimous father, the brave Brian. Pope Adrian IV., the illegitimate brother of Henry II. of England, (originally named Nicholas Brekespere) the only Englishman that ever wielded the pontifical power in Rome, alleged this presentation of the Irish regalia, by Donough, in vindication of his right to invest his brother Henry II., with the sovereignty of Ireland. What a futile, flimsy and hollow pretext for transferring a whole nation to a foreign king! The harp remained in the Vatican until Pope Leo X. sent it, and other Irish relics, as presents to Henry VIII., with the title of “*King, defender of the faith.*”‡ The departure of Donough left “no rival

* BREFFENY. The district bearing this name, formerly was known as the patrimonial territories of the O'Rourkes and O'Reillys, and comprehended the counties of Leitrim and Cavan.

† ARDAGH, which gives title to a bishop's see, is situated in the central part of the county of Longford, at the distance of six miles S. W. from Edgeworthstown. The see, as we have already stated, was founded by St. Patrick, in the year 454, who placed over it, as first bishop, St. Moel, his nephew. The country which spreads around Ardagh is fine and fertile.

‡ Some time after, Henry presented the harp to his favourite, the first earl of Clanrickarde, in whose family it remained until the beginning of the last century, when it came in the paraphernalia of Lady Eliza Burgh, into the possession of her husband, Colonel McMahon, of Clenagh, in the county of Clare; after whose death it passed into the hands of Commissioner McNamara, of Limerick. In 1782, the possession of this fluctuating harp devolved on the Right Honourable W. Conyngham, the father of the noble marquis of that name, who was such a favourite of King George IV. The marquis is an absentee, and one of those who spend the income of their estates in foreign countries. His domain and castle at

near the throne" of Turlogh; but still he never was confirmed in the monarchy by the formal recognition of the states of Ireland.

Turlogh's ambition and pride grew to the height of his power. He invaded Leinster and Connaught with a large force of the Dal-gais and the Leinsterians, under the command of his cousin, Dermot, king of Leinster. In A. D. 1072, Turlogh, with his ally and cousin Dermot, attacked Connor, the son of Malachy, at Athboy,* in Meath, and defeated his army and killed himself; but the king of Leinster also, with several of Turlogh's officers, fell in the engagement. Turlogh was a prince of heroism, clemency and generosity,—brave in the field, and wise in the cabinet. "He seems," says O'Flaherty, "to have imitated the great example of his grandfather, Brian, as far as the distractions of the times would permit, in establishing good laws, in punishing transgressors, and in protecting and rewarding merit. In short, he was worthy of his illustrious descent, and of the throne which he filled."†

Murtough, the son of Donough, assisted by his party, made an attempt, at this period, to raise an insurrection against his cousin, Turlough,—but it proved abortive, and Murtough had to fly for refuge to his relations in Connaught. Turlogh invaded Connaught,

Slane, in the county of Meath, are picturesque and magnificent. He, with a view of preserving so rare an antique of Irish royalty in an enduring shrine worthy of the memorable glory associated with the harp of "Brian the brave," deposited it in the library of the University of Dublin. When the late George IV. visited that city, he touched the strings which so often breathed the soul of melody under the masterly fingers of his royal predecessor. The erudite General Vallancey, (to whose profound researches in the literature and antiquities of Erin, the Irish are perhaps more indebted, than to any other elucidation of inquiry ever set on foot, save the sublime lights of investigation which the patriotic Lady Morgan has kindled in the historical catacombs of the ancient grandeur of the "Isle of Harps,") has given the following comprehensive description of this far-famed harp, that so often sounded the "voice of song" at the royal banquets of Tara. "It is 32 inches high, and of extraordinary good workmanship. The sounding board is of oak, the arms of red sally—the extremity of the uppermost arm, in front, is capped with silver, extremely well wrought and chiselled; it contains a large crystal set in silver, and under it was another stone now lost. The buttons or ornamental knobs, at the side of this arm, are of silver. On the arm are the arms of the O'Brien family, chased in silver—the bloody hands supported by lions. On the sides of the front arm, within two circles, are two Irish wolf dogs, cut in wood. The holes of the sounding board where the strings entered, are neatly ornamented with escutcheons of brass, carved and gilt. This harp has twenty-eight keys, and as many string holes, consequently there were so many strings. The foot-piece or rest, is broken off, and the parts to which it was joined are very rotten. The whole bears evidence of an accomplished and expert artist."—*Vide Collectanea Hibernica*.—No. 12.

* ATHBOY is a pretty village, situated in the barony of Lune, county of Meath, at the distance of three miles S. W. from Trim, and twenty-three N. W. from Dublin. Its vicinity is full of landscape ornaments—such as fine domains and monastic and castellated ruins. Near Athboy, at Rathmore, is the residence of the present Earl of Darnley, a title bestowed on his father, John Bligh, Esq., by Mr. PITT, in consequence of his voting in the Irish House of Commons for the legislative union. The Bligh family were Cromwellian adventurers, who were enriched by the ruthless regicide, with the forfeited estates of Lord Gormanstown.

† Archbishop Usher, of Armagh, has given in his works copies of the Latin letters which passed between Turlogh and Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, in one of which the primate styles the monarch Turlogh, "the magnificent king of Ireland." In another letter written by the English primate to Turlogh, the prelate says—"That God has bestowed his blessing upon the kingdom of Ireland, when he raised your majesty to the regal dignity of that kingdom, is evident to every considering person."

in A. D. 1076, reduced the whole province to subjection, and succeeded in capturing Roderick O'Connor, its king, whom he liberated on being paid a large ransom, and getting hostages from him, and from his vassal chiefs, O'Rourke of Leitrim, and O'Kelly of Galway. Shortly after returning to his palace at Limerick, he was waited upon by O'Leavey, prince of Down, and O'Mealsachlin of Meath, each of whom offered him homage, and paid him a joint tribute of 1,000 oxen, 120 mantles of gold-spangled silk, 40 ounces of gold, and many richly mounted swords and spears.

In A. D. 1084, O'Rourke, prince of Breffeny, made an irruption with his forces into Thomond, (the present county of Clare;) but as he was in the act of flying off with spoils and captives, he was overtaken at Inchiquin,* county of Clare, by Turlogh, who destroyed his army and killed himself. The latter years of Turlogh were rendered miserable by the oppression of a most painful disease which afflicted him. Prior to his death, he zealously devoted himself to prayer and penance, and founded and endowed many abbeys, among them Coonagh, Rathkeal,† and Castle-Connell,‡ in the county of Limerick. Turlogh died in the year 1086, in the seventy-seventh year of his age. He was certainly a brave warrior, possessed of an enlightened mind, and a gallant spirit. By his queen, *Saibh*, daughter of McCarthy, king of Desmond, he had four sons, Tieve, who only survived him a few months, Murtough, his immediate successor on the throne, and Dermot and Donough,—the latter was killed fighting under his brother Murtough, in battle, in Meath.

* INCHQUIN is the name of a barony and village in the county of Clare, from which the O'Brien family take the title of Earl.

† RATHKEAL, formerly a place of consequence, is a pretty little market and post town, situated on the river *Deel*, in the barony of Connello, in the county of Limerick, at the distance of 174 English miles from Dublin. Here are to be seen the ruins of an Augustinian monastery, and of a feudal castle; the latter famed, in history, for its brave opposition to the troops of Queen Elizabeth.

‡ CASTLE-CONNELL, the ancient residence of Mr. O'Connell's ancestors, the kings of Limerick, is situated on the east side of the river Shannon, at the distance of six Irish miles N. from the city of Limerick. The castle and the lands belonging to it, were granted by King John to Richard de Burgo, then earl of Ulster. The castle was converted into a strong hold, by the English, to resist the attacks of the O'Connell's and O'Briens, the chieftains of the soil. Burke, Lord Castle-Connell, a devoted adherent of the regal ingrate, James II., bravely defended this fortress for four days, against King William's whole army, under Ginkle, and the prince of Hesse, and only surrendered on the honourable condition of being permitted to repair to the garrison of Limerick. "Ginkle," says an Irish topographer, "considered it so strong a hold that he ordered it to be blown up,—and the explosion was so great that it shook many houses, and broke several windows in Limerick." The ruins of Castle-Connell stand on a high rock overhanging the river Shannon. The spa of Castle-Connell is famed for its healing virtues.

CHAPTER LXV.

Division of the Irish Monarchy between Murtough IV. and Donald V.—His wars with the Prince of Tyrconnel.—The national Synods.—Magnus Godfrey, King of Norway,—his conduct.—Accession to the throne of Turlogh II. Murtough IV,—his successor, who quarrels with his brother Dermot.—Death of Murtough in the abbey of Lismore.—Victories of Turlogh, the Great :—his death.—Intestine wars in Munster.—Geographical divisions of Ireland,—rivers, lakes and mountains.

TO TURLOGH II. succeeded his eldest son, Murtough, in A. D. 1086, but he had scarcely mounted the throne, when he banished his brother Dermot for some imputed disaffection, and then raised a numerous army, with which he invaded Leinster, and placed, as some affirm, his son Domhnal as his viceroy in that province. He ravaged the western parts of Ulster ; but Donald O'Loughlin, of the Hy-Nial dynasty, arrested his progress in the county of Donegal, in the year 1088, by compelling him to make a speedy retreat to Clare, pursued by that prince to the very gates of his palace. The victorious Donald now set up his claim to the Irish monarchy, in right of the Hy-Nial dynasty. Murtough, determined to hold the sovereignty, collected all his forces to check the ambition of his daring rival, who was joined by all the adherents of the banished Prince Dermot, who devastated and plundered a great portion of the territory of Murtough in Munster. After waging a destructive and desultory war for the crown, finally Murtough and Donald, through the interference and mediation of the archbishops of Armagh and Cashel, entered into a solemn compact, by the terms of which, Murtough was to rule over the southern part of Ireland, and Donald to hold regal sway in the northern division ; the latter territory being that held by his great ancestor, Con of the "hundred battles." The Danes of Dublin and Waterford taking advantage, at this era, of the intestine war that weakened and divided the Irish princes, elected Godfrey their chief, and declared themselves independent of the authority of Murtough ; but Murtough soon reduced them again to subjection, and constrained them to pay tribute, and to deliver hostages. Shortly after, Murtough and his brother Dermot, through the good offices of the clergy, were reconciled to each other.

"In 1101," says McDermott, "Murtough, the Third, or Murtough O'Brian, either from real regard to the interest of the church, as the historians say, or out of policy to win the affections of the clergy, which is more probable, alienated the church of Cashel from the kings of Munster, and appropriated it for ever to the archbishop's see. The account of Murtough in the book of reigns, in the Irish language, is very copious ; he is therein represented as a good and pious monarch, who made a great progress in restoring the church and state to their former splendour, in rebuilding some and endowing other churches and monasteries with lands. It is, however, very reasonably imagined that, amidst the distractions in which the kingdom was involved during his reign, though he might have had the inclination, he could not have had the power to effect

much in this way. Three national synods, or one synod continued by prorogation at different times, it is said, were summoned by Murtough. In the first of these assemblies, which consisted of the monarch and all the chiefs and clergy of his southern half of the kingdom, we are informed that many wholesome laws and regulations were established both for the church and state. In the second, which appears to have been a convocation of the clergy only, at which the bishop of Limerick, the pope's legate, presided, it was agreed that there should be twelve episcopal sees in the southern half, the same number in the northern, and two in the county of Meath. In this ecclesiastical division the see of Dublin was not mentioned; because its inhabitants being generally the descendants of the Danes or Normans, their bishop at that time received his consecration at the hands of his countryman, the archbishop of Canterbury. The see of Waterford was erected at the desire of this synod; the members of which subscribed an epistle to Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, informing him 'that it was convenient to erect Waterford into a bishopric, for which'—being another settlement of the Danes and their descendants—'they had elected and sent Malchus to him, in regard to the primacy he had over them, to be consecrated;' which was done accordingly. In the third synod, or convocation, at which, it is said, that twenty-five bishops assisted, the boundaries of the several dioceses were determined and specified, as a sanction to which they left their own and God's blessing upon all the succeeding bishops who should support the regulations ordained in that synod; and dreadful imprecations on those who should presume to violate them. Hitherto there was no pope's legate in Ireland; and the mention of one now is ascribed by Dr. Warner to the crown of Ireland having been brought to Rome by Donough, the son of Brian, and presented to the Pope.

We are told by William of Malmsbury, which is also quoted by Ware, 'that our Henry, the First, had Murtough and his successors so much at his devotion, that they would not write nor do any thing without his approbation; though it was reported that Murtough, for what cause was not known, had for some time carried himself more high than usual towards the English, but upon the interdicting of shipping and commerce, he soon grew milder.' The Irish writers take no notice of any such intercourse between the monarchs of that age; nor is there the least allusion to treaties of commerce between the Irish nation and the English, in any of their histories. There is, however, sufficient proof that Murtough governed the half of the kingdom which was allotted to him, with peace and reputation; and as a testimony that his fame was not confined to his own country, we are told, in Camden's *Chronicles of the Isle of Man*, that upon a vacancy of their government, or rather during the minority of the next heir, 'the nobility of that Isle despatched ambassadors to Murtough O'Brian, king of Ireland, desiring that he would send them some diligent man or other, of royal extraction, to rule over them during the minority of Olave, the son of their late sovereign. The king readily consented, and sent Donald, the son of Tiege, with orders and instructions to govern the kingdom,

though it belonged not to him, with modesty and tenderness. But as soon as he was advanced to the throne, he behaved with so much cruelty, that, at the end of three years, he was banished.'

The following anecdote, which is copied by Ware and Keating from the annals, does not indeed redound to the credit of this monarch, and is too ridiculous for belief. We are told that Magnus, king of Norway, sent a messenger to Murtough, with his shoes, which he commanded him to carry on his shoulders through his house on Christmas day, as a testimony of his subjection; and that the monarch complied with this ignominious injunction. Magnus, however, was not content with this abject submission of the king of Ireland, but fitted out a numerous fleet, manned with Danes and Normans, in order to plunder and destroy his country. As soon as the northern king and his nobility, and some of the soldiers, from the first ships, were landed, the Irish army, who were in ambush, were so well prepared to receive them, that the invaders were every one cut to pieces; which the rest of the fleet observing, they immediately tacked about and returned home.

In all probability there was some foundation for this story; but, without doubt, there is some strange misrepresentation; it is not to be supposed that a monarch of Murtough's descent, intrepidity and power in the southern half of Ireland, who was continually in arms with the monarch of the other half, would so tamely yield to such an insolent demand; and if he had been base enough to submit to the degradation, the king of Norway could have had no pretence for hostilities; and as no hostilities could have been expected, how could the Irish have been so well prepared to receive them? The numerous fleet which the northern king fitted out, is a proof that his indignant message to Murtough was treated with deserved contempt.

Towards the latter end of this divided monarchy, the young king of Connaught, called Turlogh, the Great, became exceedingly troublesome to both Murtough and Donald. This Turlogh was of the Heremonian line, and being possessed of a warlike spirit, he found no difficulty in taking advantage of the dissensions which then prevailed. The province of Munster had been invaded by Turlogh, and plundered with great hostility: and, though a warrior of the house of Brian attacked him in his retreat, and defeated his army with a terrible slaughter, yet soon recovering this loss, he invaded it a second time by sea and land; marching himself at the head of his army, and committing many acts of violence upon the people till he came to Cork, where his fleet, which had obeyed his order in spoiling and ravaging all the coasts, met him according to his appointment: and together they reduced the province so much under his obedience, that, taking hostages for their submission and future homage, he committed the government of the north division to Connor O'Brian, and that of the southern to Donough Mac Carthy, of the same royal house. In short, all the provinces of the island were, each in turn, invaded and harassed by this king of Connaught.

Whether Turlogh wrested all power out of the hands of Murtough,

as some writers state, or whether, as others declare, a tedious malady inclined him to relinquish the cares of a troublesome government, it is impossible to ascertain. Indeed both of these causes might have led to his secession. About two years before his death, Murtough retired to the monastery of Lismore, and after a short stay there, he took the habit of a monk, at Armagh, where he terminated his days: but the place of his interment is much disputed. In the *British Chronicles*, which treat of his death, he is styled 'the most great and worthy king of all Ireland:' and in the annals of Leighlin, it is said of him, 'Murtough, the most serene prince, faithful to his allies, formidable to his enemies, bountiful to strangers, who for his piety and justice, above all other princes, deserved the love of his subjects, died, and was buried at Ferns.'

On the death of Murtough, A. D. 1119, Donald acquired no addition to his former authority, which was still disputed by Turlogh, king of Connaught. Donald, however, contrived to preserve it till his death, which was two years after that of Murtough. This is a period in the Irish history which is attended with much confusion, owing to the different accounts given by different writers. By some we are told that Donald survived Murtough six years. Others declare that Turlogh had a share of the government of the southern division; and others, that notwithstanding all the insurrections he had occasioned, he was only king of Connaught, as before. We are informed that on the death of Donald, an interregnum of fifteen years succeeded; and again, that Turlogh assumed the title, and was in fact acknowledged king of Ireland, by the majority of the people immediately on his demise. The circumstance of the interregnum is mentioned only by Ware, and that in a very doubtful manner; and it appears from Lynch and O'Connor, that no one on the death of Donald was able to contend with Turlogh, who was owned king of Ireland by the greatest part of the nation, A. D. 1121. Indeed it is not probable that one so warlike in his temper, so powerful in the field, and so formidable to the two departed monarchs, should not seize the vacant throne of the whole kingdom immediately, but wait fifteen years, when there was no competitor, before he assumed the title of monarch of Ireland. It might have been fifteen years indeed before he had entirely subdued all the chiefs who opposed him, and got himself acknowledged by the greatest part of the people: and, in all probability, the name of interregnum has been ascribed to that unsettled period. Such an ambitious, enterprising character, no doubt assumed the title of king, as soon as Donald was dead, and grasped at the sovereign power of the whole island, for which he had contended, and, in a great measure, succeeded during his life.

The kings of Munster, of the house of Brian, between whom Turlogh had divided the government of that province, having quarrelled amongst themselves, and stirred up their factions against each other, the monarch of Ireland raised a powerful army, and a third time invaded it. But when he was advanced as far as the plains of Moin-more, he was met by Turlogh O'Brian, at the head of three battalions of the Mamonians, where the illustrious tribe of the Dal-

gais for the first time received a defeat. Their number is stated by Walsh to have been nine thousand ; but other writers, perhaps with more probability, have reckoned them only at three thousand : for since the death of Murtough, the Eugeneans had not only separated from them, but the Dalgais themselves were much divided through the different pretensions of their rival chiefs. The defeat in this battle terminated with the banishment of Turlogh O'Brian, and another division of the province of Munster, by the monarch, Turlogh II. The repeated dissensions of this royal family, brother opposing brother, and each having a separate faction at his command, so weakened the tribe of the Dalgais, which, when united, were always invincible, that their present defeat was unavoidable.

In spite of all the exertions of the several chiefs at different times to oppose Turlogh, he not only stood his ground, but was in general the conqueror. Dermot, the king of Leinster, of whom we shall have much to say in the course of this chapter, was one of those who severely felt the monarch's resentment ; indeed all the provinces in their turn were chastised by Turlogh. He made his own son king of Meath, of Dublin, and some other parts of Leinster : with his army he destroyed the country of Tyrconnel, and with his navy he laid waste the territories of Tyrone ; both under the government of Murtough O'Lachlin, prince of the North Hy-Nial. Here, however, he carried his resentment further than he could support it : and Murtough O'Lachlin, who was of the family of the last monarch Donald, became a rival too powerful for him to subdue. Indeed some writers assert that the greatness of Turlogh was so much diminished, and his power humbled by this Murtough, who was of the old Heremonian line, that the monarch was obliged to give him hostages as a security for his future peaceable conduct, even six years before he died. Be this, however, as it may, it is certain that they attacked each other several times by sea and land, with various success : and that Murtough had procured, besides the remains of the Normans, the naval power of Scotland to assist him against Turlogh. This contest, however, was concluded by the monarch's death.

Lynch, who has consequently styled the monarch, Turlogh, the Great, has written many encomiums on his valour, equity and integrity, and represented him a much better man than what he appears to have been from the records of his reign. The distractions of his time, and the continual opposition made to him by one chief or other, would not permit the accomplishment of many great actions : he built, however, the three bridges in the province of Connaught ; he completed the cathedral of Tuam ; he erected an hospital there, and endowed it with a good estate ; he settled a stipend on the professor of divinity at Armagh ; and he was so severe and inflexible in his punishment of delinquents, that having imprisoned his own son for some great offence, he rejected the application of many prelates in his favour ; and, even at the end of a year, was with great difficulty, and not without the intercession of five hundred priests, eleven bishops, and the two archbishops of Armagh and Cashel, prevailed upon to set him at liberty. Having left almost all

his personal estate to the clergy to be divided in just proportions, according to their several orders, he has had the character of being a sincere penitent. Besides many donations to the clergy of Tuam, and a great number of silver crosses, chalices and goblets, he gave to several churches and religious houses, all his costly furniture, his gold and silver vases, his gems and jewels, his plate, his horses, arms, and all his military equipage, his herds of cattle, together with sixty marks of silver, and sixty-five ounces of gold."

In the first chapter of this history, we have given an account of the various names by which Ireland was known in ancient ages, consequently it is unnecessary to enumerate them again. We will, however, only say here that Ireland became so famous after the introduction of Christianity into the island, for the learning, piety and philanthropy of her ecclesiastics and teachers, who, as religious missionaries, and erudite philosophers, went forth to diffuse religion and letters through the other nations of Europe, then benighted in mental darkness, that foreigners bestowed upon the country the title of "*Insula sanctorum*," the holy island. Ireland is situated in the Atlantic ocean, between $51^{\circ} 19'$ and $55^{\circ} 23'$ north latitude, and between $5^{\circ} 19'$ and $10^{\circ} 28'$ west longitude. It is bounded on the east by St. George's channel, which separates it from England and Wales,—on the northeast by the Irish sea, which runs between it and Scotland, and on the northwest and south by the Atlantic ocean. The sea distance betwixt Ireland and England, widens at some points to forty leagues, and narrows at others to fourteen. The distance between Donaghadee, in the county of Down, and to the opposite coast of Scotland, forms a channel of six leagues. "It has," says an English writer, "been truly observed that the situation of Ireland, in relation to other countries capable of receiving and bestowing the mutual benefits of external commerce, is particularly favourable. In this respect, as is remarked by Mr. Newenham, Ireland may be said to excel England; it being possible for ships, departing from a majority of the ports of the former, to reach the western coast of France, the coasts of Portugal and Spain, and even that of North America, to perform half the voyage to the west Indies, or to the different countries bordering on the Mediterranean sea, before the ships which sail from the greater portion of the ports of the latter, can enter the Atlantic ocean."

The extreme length of the island is, according to a late government survey, taken by a line running from Fair-head, county of Antrim, and Mizen-head, in the county of Cork, 306 English miles, and the expanse of breadth of the kingdom from Emlagh-Rash,* county Mayo, to Carnsore-Point,† Wexford, has been found by measurement to be 207 English miles. "It has been often remarked," writes Mr. Newenham, "and must be repeated here, that there is not any part of Ireland quite fifty miles distant from the

* EMLAGH-RASH is a rocky peninsula situated in the barony of Erris, on the coast of the county of Mayo.

† CARNSORE-POINT runs into St. George's channel, and is situated in the barony of Forth, county of Wexford; it is a parish in the diocese of Ferns. There are extensive and impressive abbey ruins standing on this point, at the foot of Doman-gaid, a lofty mountain impending over the sea.

sea,—so devious is the coast, and so deep are the indentations effected by the numerous bays. The sinuous line of the sea-coast of Ireland, exclusive of such parts as lie within estuaries, or above the first good anchorage in every harbour, but inclusive of the river Shannon as far as the tide reaches, and the shores of Dunmanus bay,* Bantry bay, and Kenmare river, will, if accurately followed through all its windings, be found to measure 1,737 miles: in this line there are no less than 130 harbours and places where ships may anchor for a tide, or find shelter during the continuance of adverse winds. The most commodious of the bays and harbours are found on the line of coast stretching towards the west, from Waterford on the south, to Lough Foyle on the north coast, in which line it is believed that they are more numerous than in the same extent of coast in any other part of the world. Here the shore opposes to the fury of the Atlantic ocean, unnumbered promontories, often of a bold and commanding character, that assist in forming many noble havens, several of which are capable of receiving the whole of the British navy." In several of the Irish bays and havens are numerous islands, fertile and cultivated, clothed with arborescent and grassy verdure. Mr. BREWER, who certainly wrote with candour and justice of our native land, states—"There has not yet been made a survey of Ireland with sufficient accuracy to enable us to state, with any resemblance of certainty, the superficial contents of the island. Dr. Beaufort has made a computation by measuring the area of each county on the map formed by himself, and he asserts that, after rejecting all fractions, Ireland contains considerably more than 18,750 square miles, or several thousand acres above twelve millions, Irish measure; which is equal to 30,370 English miles, or 19,436 acres." Mr. Wakefield estimates the number of Irish acres contained in the area of Ireland, at 12,723,616.

THE ASPECT OF THE COUNTRY is thus described by an English

* DUNMANUS BAY is situated in the barony of Carberry, county of Cork,—it is deep and spacious, and divided from that of Bantry by a narrow point of headland extending into the sea. There are the ruins of an ancient castle to be seen here. Of Bantry-town, in the county of Cork, we have already spoken in a note to a preceding chapter of this history, but of the matchless, spacious and magnificent bay, which is capable of containing all the fleets of Europe and America, we would say that it is twenty-five miles in length, from its most eastern point to the ocean, and its main breadth is about seven miles. There are several beautiful islands interspersed through the bay, whose sylvan scenery presents to the view imposing landscape attractions. BEAR ISLAND is of considerable extent; it lies near the mouth of the bay, and is belted by a balustrade of rocks. The Isle of WHIDDY is highly cultivated, and it is garnished with rich and picturesque decorations of art. The French fleet, in 1796, which attempted to invade Ireland, anchored, after being shattered by a furious storm, on the northwest quarter of the island of Whiddy. The mountainous shores of Bantry bay are remarkable for their sublime mixture of wildness, romanticity and grandeur; amongst which the majestic elevation of the mountain monarch of the scene, HUNGRY HILL, is eminently conspicuous for its loftiness, beauty, and pictorial magnificence. "It is very generally allowed," says BREWER, in his *Beauties of Ireland*, "that no single view, even among the various beauties of Killarney, equals this of Bantry. The extent of the prospect is not too great for the visual capacity, while it fills the mind with astonishment and admiration." A great naval battle was fought, A. D. 1789, in the bay of Bantry, between the English and the French fleets, in which the former were victorious. The O'Sullivans were, for ages, the chieftains of Bear island and Bantry bay. Boston, May, 1836.

traveller—"Ireland may be described as a country partly level, and partly of a surface gently undulating, with many interspersed mountains. Considerable elevations occur in the contiguity of most parts of the coast which are exposed to the fury of the western ocean. The shores of Antrim, on the northeast, are rocky, bold and high; and the county of Wicklow, on the eastern margin of the island, chiefly consists of one vast assemblage of granite mountains. The natural features of Ireland, considered in a pictorial view, may, indeed, be said to consist of extremes. Districts scarcely to be rivalled, and certainly not to be excelled in their respective points of beauty, by the most admired and celebrated parts of any country, are contrasted with monotonous and dull tracts—flat, stony, dreary, incapable of eliciting one pleasurable emotion in the mind of the spectator. It is obvious that such a disposal of natural circumstances is, on the whole, favourable to a display of nature in her grandeur and unusual beauties. The principle of poetical influence is here exemplified on a stupendous theatre. More equable scenery lulls and soothes the mind, but leaves its energies untouched. The amazing contrariety of Irish landscape admits of no medium, but gratifies the traveller in the same degree as does the artificial expedient of conducting to the blaze of noon-day splendour, through the gloom of a darkened avenue." It was justly, we think, observed by MR. ARTHUR YOUNG, in his Irish tour, that, "the mountains of Ireland give to travelling that interesting variety which a flat country can never abound with."

Ireland is diversified and ornamented by some high, picturesque and romantic mountains, amongst the most conspicuously eminent of which, are *Curraneah-Toohill* or *Macgillicuddy's* rocks, county of Kerry, which may be viewed from the lakes of Killarney, as the ridge rises to the elevation of 1,180 yards above the level of the sea; the next highest mountain is *Donard*, in the county of Down, which ascends to the height of 2,809 feet; Mangerton mountain, in the county of Kerry, towers to the elevation of 2,693 feet; the height of Croagh-Patrick, county Mayo, is 2,660; of Niphin, in the same county, 2,630; of Carlingford, county of Louth, 1,855; of Gallan, county of Derry, 1,789; of Gullen, county of Armagh, 1,749. We regret that we cannot assert what is the elevation of the Nagle and Kilworth mountains, county of Cork, or of the Curlew ones, in the county of Sligo,—of Knockpatrick, county of Limerick,—of Muckish, county of Donegal,—of Scalp, county of Wicklow, of Sliebh-na-gridel, county of Down,—of Sliebh-buy, county of Wexford,—of Sliebh-teach, county of Carlow,—of Ormond, or the Galties, county Tipperary,—of Sliebh-bangh, county of Monaghan,—of Sliebh-baughta, county of Galway,—of Sliebh-bonn, county of Roscommon,—of Slenish, county of Antrim,—nor of Coshbride, county of Waterford.

The principal rivers in Ireland, are the Shannon, the Barrow, the Boyne, the Liffey, the three Blackwaters, one in the county of Cork, one in Meath, and the other in the county of Armagh,—the Nore, the Suir, the Lee, the Bann, the Moy, county of Sligo,—the Suck, county of Roscommon,—the Brosnagh, county of West-

meath,—the Maig, county of Limerick,—the Glare, county of Mayo,—the Fane, county of Louth,—the Lagan, county of Down,—the Slaney, county of Wicklow,—the Newry, county of Down,—the Roe, county of Derry,—the Mourne, county of Donegal,—the Earn, county of Cavan,—the Glyde, county of Monaghan,—the Mein, county of Antrim,—the Callen, county of Armagh,—the Foyle, county of Tyrone,—the Banden, county of Cork,—the Blackwater, county of Cavan,—the Ovoca, county of Wicklow,—and the Dee, county of Louth.

The chief lakes of Ireland are, in the province of Ulster, the Neagh, the Earne, Strangford, Swilly, Agher, Ballydowgan, Ballynahinch, Derig, county of Donegal,—Erin, Falcon, Foyle, Guilee, Keenan, Leigh, county of Cavan,—and Guilb, in the county of Antrim. In the province of Connaught, the most noted lakes are Allen, county of Leitrim,—Arrow, county of Sligo,—Conn, county of Mayo,—Corrib, county of Galway,—Gill, county of Sligo,—Ree, county of Roscommon,—Shy, county of Mayo,—and Ray, county of Leitrim. In Leinster are to be seen the following named lakes, viz. : Derveragh, county of West Meath,—Hanah, Queen's county,—Inny, Lane, Loughhall, Scuds and Shillen, all in the county of West Meath,—and Swilly, in the county of Louth. The principal lakes of Munster, are Killarney, Drine, Hine, Allua and Lee, county of Cork,—Inchiquin, county of Clare,—and Loughmore, county of Limerick.

Ireland is indented with the following spacious bays : Dublin, Waterford, Bantry, Kenmare, Carlingford, Strangford, Foyle, Swilly and Killybegs, county of Donegal,—Galway, Donegal, Limerick, Smerwick, county of Kerry,—Baltimore, Kinsale, Wexford, Drogheda, Dundalk, Killough, Ardglass, county of Down,—Donaghadee, Coleraine, Youghall, Dungarvan, Sligo, as well as many others, where large ships may safely enter.

SOIL AND CLIMATE.* The soil of Ireland is generally rich and fruitful, and much diversified in its geological genus. The author of the agricultural survey, has classified the Irish soil under four species :—"the calcareous, or that found in the limestone tracts,—the loamy kind, by which are meant the deep and mellow soils, remote from limestone, and generally occurring in less elevated parts of the grey and red stone districts,—the light and shallow soils, resting upon an absorbent bottom, as gravel and rubbly stone,—and the moorland or peat soil, the usual substratum of which is hard rock, or coarse retentive clay." Mr. Arthur Young, a liberal

* SPENSER, in his "*View of Ireland*," written in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, observes of the soil, situation and climate of our native land :—"And sure it is yet a most beautiful and sweet country as any under heaven;—being stored throughout with many goodly rivers, replenished with all sorts of fish abundantly ; sprinkled with many sweet islands and goodly lakes, like little inland seas, that will carry even ships upon their waters ; adorned with goodly woods even fit for building houses and ships, so commodiously, as that if some princes in the world had them, they would soon hope to be lords of all the seas, and ere long, of all the world ;—also full of very good ports and havens opening upon England, inviting us to come unto them to see what excellent commodities that country can afford ;—besides the *soyle itselfe* most fertile, fit to yield all kinds of fruit that shall be committed thereunto. And lastly, the heavens most mild and temperate, though somewhat more moist than the parts towards the west."

English tourist, who travelled through Ireland in the year 1779, in writing of the Irish soil, says, "Ireland abounds with some of the finest pastures in the world, and their fertility is indeed extraordinary."

The CLIMATE of the country is thus characterized by Mr. Brewer, a very liberal and enlightened English traveller, who journeyed through our native country in the year 1825. "The climate of Ireland may be described, in general terms, as being greatly variable, but not subject to extremes, either of heat or cold. Such careful and repeated observations as are necessary to convey scientific information, have not been made, in sufficiently numerous parts of this country; and intelligence of a general nature is, therefore, all that can be afforded. The prevailing mildness of the climate is evinced by the rich verdure retained, throughout the whole of the year, by the best pastures, except in the most northern part of the island. An additional proof is found in the vigorous growth of the arbutus and myrtle, often on exposed and elevated situations. The degree of cold is, indeed, seldom so intense as to produce lasting congelations; and snow rarely falls, except in the mountainous districts. Hurricanes are frequent; but storms, attended with thunder and lightning, are of unusual occurrence. The summers are rarely attended with oppressive heat; but very dry summers are still more uncommon. The seasons are later than in England. Spring is tardy in its approach, and the fall of the leaf seldom commences before November. The moistness of the Irish climate, as compared with that of Britain, is the characteristic by which it is most strongly marked. In consequence of its situation between England and the Atlantic ocean, Ireland necessarily arrests, in its progress, the vast body of vapour collected from the wide expanse of waters, which, attracted and broken by the mountains, descends in copious showers. It would appear, however, that the humidity of the climate, as far as it is connected with the fall of rain, is caused rather by the frequency of the showers, than by the quantity of water which descends. It may be noticed in this place, as a curious feature in the natural history of the country, that Ireland is free from all venomous creatures. No kind of serpent is found here, nor are there any moles or toads. Frogs are seen in abundance, but it is said that the first were imported from England, about one century back."

The CHARACTER of the Irish people, by foreign writers, is painted thus. Giraldus Cambrensis, or Gerald Barry, who was chaplain to King John, represented the Irish of that age as "valiant in war, gallant in love, generous in hospitality, and unmatched by any nation, in the art of music." CAMPION, an Englishman, who wrote in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, with all the bitter prejudice which impregnated the minds of the English writers of that epoch, delineates the Irish character thus: "The people are religious, frank, amorous, ireful, sufferable of pains infinite, very glorious, delighted with wars, great alms-givers, passing in hospitality.* The same

* "The rites of hospitality," says DANIEL DE WAR, a Scotchman, in his book, entitled, *Observations on the Character and Customs of the Irish*, "among this

being virtuously bred up or reformed, are such mirrors of holiness and austerity, that other nations retain but a shadow or show of devotion in comparison with them." CAMDEN, in his annals of Queen Elizabeth, published in the year 1615, gave the following portrait of the Irish:—"They are of a middle stature, strong of body, of an hotter and moister nature than many other nations, of wonderful soft skins, and by reason of the tenderness of their muscles, they excel in nimbleness, and the flexibility of all parts of their body. They are reckoned of a quick wit, prodigal of their lives, enduring travel, cold and hunger, given to fleshy lusts, kind and courteous to strangers, constant in love, impatient of abuse and injury, in enmity implacable, and in all affections most vehement and passionate." Spenser, after describing the dress and arms of our ancient warriors, says, "I heard great warriors say, that in all the services which they had seen abroad in foreign countries, they never saw a more comely man than the Irishman, nor that cometh on more bravely in his charge."

We will conclude this chapter by giving a geographical and statistical description of the four provinces of the kingdom of Ireland, named LEINSTER, MUNSTER, CONNAUGHT and ULSTER, which provinces comprehend thirty-two counties, which are subdivided into 252 baronies, and the latter are partitioned into 2,436 parishes.

The province of LEINSTER is bounded by Ulster on the north,—on the east by St George's channel,—on the west by Connaught,—and on the south by the sea and part of Munster; and is about 128 miles in length, and 74 in breadth. It contains twelve counties, viz.: Dublin, Meath, Kildare, Kilkenny, King's county, Longford, West Meath, Wexford, Queen's county, Louth, Carlow and Wicklow, which comprehend 992 parishes. It is a rich and fertile province, thickly studded with cultivated domains and fruitful farms, which occupy an area of 2,792,450 acres, or 7,360 English square miles. The population of Leinster was found, by a late census, to be 1,998,695 souls. Its chief cities and towns are Dublin, Kilkenny, Drogheda, Trim, Kells, Mullingar, Naas, Wicklow, Wexford, Philipstown, Maryborough, Dundalk, Granard, Carlow and Kells (county of Meath.) The most ancient Milesian families of Leinster, holding estates on the arrival of the English, were the O'Kavanaghs, O'Byrnes, O'Tooles, Kinsellas, Murphys, O'Kellys, O'McLoghlins, (the descendants of Malachy II.) the Beataghs, O'Molloys, O'Mores,

people, as among all the Celtic tribes, are deemed sacred. The stranger is treated on all occasions with the utmost attention and respect, with a courtesy and politeness which more elevated society consider as belonging, exclusively, to themselves. The Irish are ardent and high spirited, and full of impetuosity: they have got some vanity, they may be flattered, as they possess the warmest affections, and they may be very easily secured; but they have a degree of resentment that will not suffer them, with impunity, to be injured or insulted." Mr. Brewer, in eulogising the characteristic hospitality of the Irish nation, concludes his laudatory remarks thus:—"The virtue of *hospitality* has been so frequently attributed to the Irish, in the warm language of grateful admiration, that their liberality on this head is now almost confirmed into a proverb. It has been forcibly and truly said, that a stranger might travel throughout the land, might inspect the richest and the poorest districts, and meet with unpurchased shelter and entertainment in the whole of his journey."

O'Connors, O'Carrolls, O'Dempsys, McCoghlin's, O'Ryan's, O'Duns, McGuinis's, O'Hanlon's, McMurrough's, Fitzpatrick's, O'Brennan's, McGeoghans, Daltons, McAulay's, O'Farrell's and O'Tuitt's.

The province of MUNSTER, the largest in Ireland, is bounded on the east by Leinster,—on the west by the Atlantic ocean,—on the north by parts of Leinster and Connaught, from which it is separated by the river Shannon,—and on the south by the ocean: its length is estimated to be 135 miles, and its breadth 120, and its square miles, according to Wakefield, 9,276, English measure, equal in Irish acres, to 3,377,160. It contains six counties, viz.: Clare, Kerry, Cork, Limerick, Tipperary and Waterford, which are subdivided into 59 baronies, 816 parishes, and inhabited by a computed population of 2,168,293. The chief towns of this province are Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Ennis, Clonmel, Cashel, Dungarvan, Tralee, Killarney, Cloyne, Fermoy, Mallow and Rathkeal, (county of Limerick.)* The ancient proprietors of the territory of Munster, at the period of the English invasion, were the McCarthys, O'Sullivan's, O'Connells, O'Briens, O'Mahony's, O'Driscoll's, O'Leary's, O'Dees, O'Sheas, O'Keefe's, O'Healy's, O'Lehans, O'Donoughue's, O'Flanney's, O'Gradys, O'Loughlin's, O'Mahons, O'Dalys, O'Kearney's, O'Callans, O'Gormans, McGillicuddy's and Macnamaras.

The province of CONNAUGHT contains five counties, viz.: Galway, Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo. It is bounded on the south by Munster,—on the north and west by the Atlantic ocean,—and on the east by parts of Ulster and Leinster. The principal towns of this province are Galway, Sligo, Roscommon, Castlebar, Athlone, Westport, (county of Mayo) Jamestown, Tuam and Carrick-on-Shannon (county of Leitrim.) The population of the province amounted, in the year 1833, to 1,368,177. This is the greatest grazing province in Ireland, as the counties of Galway, Roscommon, Mayo and Sligo, supply the great fair of Ballinasloe, which is attended by purchasers from all parts of the kingdom, with immense numbers of oxen, heifers and sheep. Prior to the invasion of Henry II., the Milesian proprietors of the soil of Connaught, were the O'Connors, O'Kelly's, O'Rourke's, O'Mailly's, O'Reilly's, O'Hallorans, O'Flaherty's, McDermotts, O'Maddens and O'Lally's.

ULSTER, the most northern province of Ireland, containing nine counties, viz.: Antrim, Armagh, Cavan, Donegal, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry, Monaghan and Tyrone, is bounded on the north by the *Deucaliednian* sea,—on the east by St. George's channel,—on the west by the Atlantic ocean,—and on the southwest by parts of

* "This southern province comprises tracts of great natural beauty and fertility, but there are many ranges of mountains inaccessible to the agriculturist, and not calculated to afford any real benefit to society, unless it shall be found that they contain mineral products in sufficient quantities to reward the efforts of enterprise and industry. To the traveller in search of the picturesque, many parts of Munster will afford high gratification. The charms of Killarney exalt this island to a rivalry with Switzerland, the great show-place of Europe. Nor are the attractions of Munster confined to the boasted splendour of the lakes. Its extensive lines of coast, in various parts, but particularly those towards the west, display unusual grandeur of scenery; and the banks, not only of the principal rivers, but of some unregarded streams, reveal beauties calculated to surprise and enchant the admirer of nature."—*Brewer's Beauties of Ireland*, Vol. II. page 340.

the provinces of Leinster and Connaught. Ulster is 68 miles in length, and its greatest breadth from Malin-head, county of Donegal, to the point of the lough of Strangford, county of Down, is calculated to be 98 Irish miles, and "the circumference, including the windings and turnings," says Seward, in his *Topographia Hibernica*, "at 460 miles, while the superficial area, or contents of the province, in Irish acres, has been laid down in survey, at 3,143,110 acres." This province possesses 54 baronies, and 332 parishes. The most noted towns in Ulster are Belfast, Londonderry, Armagh, Donegal, Lifford, Carrickfergus, Omagh, Enniskillen, Downpatrick, Cavan, Newry, Monaghan, Cootehill and Castleblaney. The toparchs of its Milesian chiefs were, before the coming of the English, the O'Neils, O'Donnells, O'Cahans, O'Doughertys, McMahons, Maguires, O'Gallaghers, O'Clearys, O'Quins, McSweenys, McDonalds, O'Haras, O'Shiels, McCartans, McGinnises and McQuillions. Ulster is famous for producing the best butter, the most delicious salmon, and the finest linen that Ireland can afford. The province is rich in minerals and fossils. Several veins of iron, lead and copper ores, have been discovered in the counties of Tyrone, Antrim and Armagh; and the amethysts, crystals, and calcareous petrefactions of Lough Neagh, are highly valued by lapidaries. The basaltics of Antrim, the pearls, marble and *steaties* of the county of Donegal, can scarcely be equalled by any other county in the kingdom.* The population of the province in the year 1833, was computed to be 2,393,128.

CHAPTER LXVI.

Wars between the monarch, Murtough, and Roderick, King of Connaught.—The invasion of Ulster, in A. D. 1164, by the monarch, Murtough, who cruelly causes the eyes of Eochaidh, the King of that province, to be put out, and three of his principal officers to be executed.—Death and character of Murtough.—Roderick O'Connor assumes the title of King of Ireland.—A convocation of the national states at Dublin, A. D. 1166, where Roderick is crowned King of Ireland.—He invades Ulster,—the consequence.—The architecture, round towers, and state of letters in Ireland, at this era.—Learned Irishmen of the twelfth century.

THE death of the great Turlogh, made room for his ambitious rival, Murtough O'Lachlin, or O'Neil, in the year 1156, to exercise sovereign sway as supreme monarch of Ireland. With the exception of Prince Roderick O'Connor, son of the late King Turlogh, all the provincial kings offered him the homage of allegiance, paid him tribute, and sent to him hostages.

Murtough invaded Munster, and imposed heavy contributions on the inhabitants, but on returning in triumph to his palace at Kells, in the county of Meath, he was alarmed and enraged to find that

* A writer on the mineral productions of Ulster, observes:—"In the county of Donegal are to be found, in many places, quarries of white marble, even freer from the grey veins than the Italian. Near the Rosses there are from twenty to thirty acres of ground, under which is nothing but white marble, which can be raised in blocks of any size."

Roderick had not only ravaged his paternal territory of Tyrone, but burned and wasted the peninsula of Ennishowen,* county of Donegal. He reduced the entire province of Munster to subjection, and then carried the terror of his arms into Leinster and Munster, the greater part of which he laid desolate and devastated, and returned to Connaught with immense spoils of conquest.

He gave his soldiers but a short time to repose under their victorious laurels,—for his daring ambition was ever on the wing, he resolved to invade Meath, and wrest the sceptre from the hands of the monarch, Murtough. With a recruited and high spirited army, he set out on his expedition, and quickly reached the confines of Meath, and overran, as a conqueror, the greater portion of it, and the adjoining counties, before the monarch was able to arrest his career. But Murtough's power was not to be easily subverted,—he gallantly opposed Roderick in several engagements, with various success, but at length the contending belligerents agreed to make peace, by the conditions of which Murtough ceded to Roderick, free from tribute, his own province of Connaught, and the half of East Meath; and as a pledge for fulfilling the terms of the treaty, they exchanged hostages. Roderick, before he commenced his march homewards, sold his half of Meath to its own chief, O'Mealsachlin, or Malachy, for 100 ounces of pure gold. By advice of the Pope's legate, Cardinal John Paparo, and of the four archbishops, who had just received palls from his Eminence, for Armagh, Dublin, Tuam and Cashel, Murtough called a synod of the prelates and clergy of the kingdom to Kells,† to settle the ecclesiastical affairs of the several sees of the country.

Immediately after the dissolution of the synod, Murtough, to avenge some real or imaginary affront, offered to him by Eochaidh, king of Ulster, made an irruption into his province, which he devastated with the most violent hostility, making many captives, and accumulating much spoils. The Ultonian king effected his escape from the fury of the conqueror to Armagh, where he entreated the archbishop to interpose his mediation between him and the monarch. The mediation was accepted, and in consequence, a peace was effected between the hostile parties, for the fulfilment of whose stipulations the arch prelate, and the prince of Orgial, became guarantees, on the now reconciled rival chiefs swearing at the steps of the great altar of the Armagh cathedral, "*by the holy staff of St. Patrick, and by all the saintly relics of Ireland,*" that they would, as far as regarded each other, adhere with inviolable fidelity to the conditions of their solemn compact. But, notwithstanding, scarcely had a year

* ENNISHOWEN, as it is called, (but it should be spelled *Innis*, an island,) is a barony in the county of Donegal, which stretches out its peninsular points far into lough Swilly. Its scenery is wild, imposing and romantic,—diversified with mountains, lakes and islands. The *Innis-owen* whiskey is famed for its excellence over all Europe and America.

† KELLS is a fine and opulent town, agreeably situated on the river Blackwater, county of Meath, at the distance of 39 English miles from Dublin. "It was once," says BREWER, "a place of great ecclesiastical celebrity, and was of so much value, in a military point of view, that it was formerly deemed the "*Key of Meath.*" We have, in a preceding note, stated that St. Columb-Kille founded an abbey in Kells, A. D. 550.

elapsed ere Murtough made another incursion into *Ullad*, the county of Down, surprised the unfortunate *Eochaidh*, his own blood relation, near Dundrum,* had him seized, and then most cruelly caused his eyes to be put out, and three of his chiefs to be assassinated. This barbarous deed provoked the ire and indignation of the prince of Orgial, who, it will be recollected, had become his surety, conjointly with the primate, to such a pitch of choler, that he took a solemn oath to have revenge on the monarch, or die in the attempt. He quickly mustered all the forces he could, and at the head of 9,000 men, made a rapid descent into Tyrone, and was almost at the portals of the monarch's palace, in Dungannon, ere Murtough became acquainted of his hostile approach. Thus surprised and endangered, he had no time to collect a force adequate to oppose, with any chance of success, the invader; but possessing, as he eminently did, a heroic spirit, and disdaining to surrender, with life, to his foe, rushed out at the head of only his household guards, and a few followers collected on the spur of the emergency, to give battle to him. Never did the valour and generalship of Murtough display themselves so magnificently as at the battle of *Litterluin*, near Dungannon,—for although his little, but brave army scarcely mustered 500 men, he prolonged the desperate conflict with the whole forces of Orgial, for three hours; at the expiration of which time, he fell under a shower of spears, while gallantly endeavouring to cut his way to the station of the prince of Orgial, whom he challenged to single combat. “Thus,” writes an Ultonian annalist, “fell Murtough, the most intrepid hero of his day, the ornament of his country, the thunderbolt of war, and the Hector of western Europe!” There is no doubt of his having been a heroic soldier, if our ancient historians deserve credit, but as a conqueror, he was cruel, relentless and vindictive, and incapable of evincing magnanimity of forgiveness, or nobleness of elemency to his fallen foes. The battle of Litterluin, in the county of Tyrone, where Murtough died like a brave king, was fought A. D. 1166.

Roderick O'Connor, the most powerful opponent of the late king, was now proclaimed monarch of Ireland, although not the rightful heir to the throne; but his military power levelled all obstacles that stood in his way to the summit of regal authority. Immediately after his accession, he convened a meeting of the states of the kingdom, at Dublin, where they unanimously approved of his assumption

* DUNDUM, county of Down, barony of Lecale, is a high rock, still presenting the massy ruins of a castle erected in 1313, by Sir John de Coursey, hanging over the bay of Strangford. Many historical events are connected with Dundrum, which we shall narrate at an appropriate time. It is distant from Dublin 68 Irish miles. “When the castle,” writes Harris, “was in repair, it often proved a good guard to this pass, and as often an offensive neighbour to the English planted in Lecale, when in the hands of the Magennises, the ancient proprietors of the districts surrounding Dundrum.” The ruins to which the soldiers of that sanguinary destroyer of Irish architectival monuments, (Oliver Cromwell,) reduced the castle of Dundrum, in 1652, present a circular keep or tower, strongly buttressed and barbicaned. The circumference of the keep is forty-two feet. From the summit of the rock a fine and extensive view of the outspread bay of Strangford and Dundrum, can be commanded, as well as of the majestic mountains of Mourne, which tower near Dundrum in a southern direction. The village consists of but few houses, and those are of an humble character.

of regal sway,—and, in consequence, he was solemnly inaugurated by the archbishop of Dublin, as monarch of Ireland. Having thus obtained the reins of sovereign power, he began to give a free and full scope to his ambition. At the head of a large army he traversed the whole kingdom, for the purpose of compelling the provincial kings, and their dependent chiefs, to pay him tribute, and swear to him allegiance. The O'Neils of Tyrone, sons of the late monarch, Murtough, were forced to render him homage, and give him hostages. From Tyrone he marched into Tirconnell,* where the toparchs of that district, utterly unable to contend with him, were necessitated to submit to such terms of vassalage as he had thought proper to dictate. After making treaties with the O'Donnells of Donegal, and the O'Dougherties of Derry, he marched into the territories of the McMahanons of Monaghan, of the O'Reillys of Cavan, of the O'Rourkes of Leitrim, and of the O'Mealsachlins of Meath, and obliged each of their chiefs to tender him fealty, and to offer him homage. Flushed with pride and success, he returned to Dublin, where he had not been but a few days, ere he issued a requisition, commanding a meeting, at Athboy, in the county of Meath, (a place about 30 Irish miles N. W. from Dublin,) and, conformably thereto, all the princes and chiefs of the kingdom attended, as well as the four archbishops of Ireland. The convocation of Athboy, was the last parliament or assembly that was ever held under our Milesian princes. It was a magnificent meeting, equal, according to the authority of the historians, in rank, respectability and magnitude, to the greatest conventions of Tara in the most glorious days of Milesian royalty.

Roderick had not been long in possession of the monarchy, before he assumed the part of a despot, and in consequence of which, several of the provincial kings revolted from their allegiance. O'Neil proclaimed him an usurper; but Roderick was not to be intimidated by threats,—the love of sovereign sway, and the resolution of maintaining it, excited his pride and courage. He had a naval armament fitted out in the port of Galway,† which effected a

* TIRCONNELL (erroneously spelled *Tyr*) was the ancient name of the county of Donegal, bestowed upon it in consequence of Nial, the Great, the common ancestor of the O'Neils and O'Donnells, having bequeathed that territory to his son Connel, from whom were descended the illustrious O'Donnells of Donegal. Boston, June 4, 1836.

† GALWAY town, the capital of the county of that name, is finely situated on a spacious bay in the Atlantic ocean, in the barony of Moycullen, 133 English miles W. from Dublin. The greater number of the houses are neatly built, and present an appearance of elegance and taste. Their number, in 1832, consisted of 1,138 houses, inhabited by a population of 33,219 persons. The inhabitants are public spirited and patriotic. A brisk trade in grain, linen and fish, of which extensive exports are made, enable the principal people of the town to enjoy the comforts of life, and to indulge in their proverbial propensity to hospitality. The Protestant church and Roman Catholic chapel are very creditable specimens of ecclesiastical architecture. The new court house is a tasteful and spacious Ionic edifice. Galway was formerly a place of great consequence, as its ancient dilapidated castles and monastic ruins sufficiently testify. Of the many memorable sieges which it bravely stood, we will speak in a future chapter of this history. The noble and impressive ruins of the magnificent monastery founded A. D. 1296, by Sir William De Burgh, for Franciscan friars, present architectural majesty in decay. The abbey of St. Mary, of which there is now scarcely a vestige remain-

landing in Ulster, while the monarch himself overran, with fierce conquest, the whole of the counties of Tyrone and Armagh, consequently O'Neil and his tributaries were obliged to submit to the conqueror.

After reducing the north to obedience, he penetrated into Leinster, and levied tribute from Mac Murchad,—the prince of Ossory, and O'Carroll, of Orgial. Having thus reduced all the most potent toparchs of the kingdom, and compelled them to secure their future allegiance by delivering hostages into his hands, he led his victorious legions in triumph to his native province, Connaught.

But we will now proceed with finishing this chapter, by giving to our readers a disquisition on the ancient Irish architecture, ornaments, weapons and utensils.

The Grecian orders of architecture were probably those employed in the building of palaces and temples, by the first colonies that settled in Ireland. The Druidical temples were generally built in a masculine Doric style, to insure durability. The fragments of broken cornices and architraves, as well as the sculptured figures that enriched the friezes of these edifices, which are still to be seen in Ireland, afford an indubitable proof of the perfection to which the Pagan Irish carried the arts of sculpture and architecture. The palaces of Tara and Emania were immense Ionic piles, whose lofty vaulted domes “rested,” to use the language of Dr. Harris, “on a forest of marble columns.”

It is pretty generally supposed that the blocks from which these pillars were hewn, were brought from Greece. The florid Corinthian order was not introduced into Ireland until the middle of the fifth century, when some of our princes, enamoured with its beauty, majesty and lightness, used it in the erection of their mansions. The Christian Irish did not, for ages, build their ecclesiastical edifices in the Gothic style, as that order so calculated for augmenting the solemnity of divine worship was not prevalent in England or Ireland, until after the Norman conquest. Some writers have attributed the invention of this style to the Normans, while others contend that it was only borrowed by them from the eastern Saracens. Indeed we know from history, that the Justinian edifices at Constantinople, particularly the church of St. Sophia, possess the characteristics of this “pointed style,” as it is technically called; but it was in Spain, Germany and England, that it was carried to perfection. The churches built by St. Patrick at Armagh, Slane, Trim, Finglas, Archad-Abla, (in the county of Wexford,) Ardagh, Down, Coleraine, Clogher, Inis-More and Druin-lias, (in the county of Sligo,) all exhibit the evident characteristics of the Grecian orders. These churches, both in their general form and architectural decoration, were perfectly similar to those in Normandy,

ing, was demolished, in A. D. 1651, by the townsmen of Galway, in order to prevent Cromwell's general from making a fortification of it to annoy themselves. There was, also, an Augustinian friary on a hill near this town, which was founded in the year 1508, by Stephen Lynch, and Margaret, his wife, of which Richard Nangle, afterwards archbishop of Tuam, was the first prior. The scenery which surrounds Galway, possesses much landscape grace and garniture, particularly the romantic and picturesque banks of Lough Corrib.

particularly in the structure of aisles and cloisters. These edifices were generally rectangular, though some of them terminated on the east, in a semicircle; they had high stone pedimental roofs ornamented with a sculptured cornice. Beneath were vaulted crypts, where the monks retired to perform penance and suffer mortification. The facade was ornamented with rows of circular arches, some of the intersections of which were opened as windows. The marble sashes of these windows were beautiful specimens of Irish sculpture.* The steeples were sometimes square, but generally round and of the doric order. From the days of St. Patrick until the eleventh century, all the ecclesiastical erections in Ireland were built according to the Grecian orders of architecture.

The celebrated chapel erected in Cashel, by King Cormac, in the beginning of the tenth century, surpassed in grandeur of design and beauty of architecture, any religious edifice in France or England. Indeed, the numerous magnificent ruins, which must astonish the traveller who visits Ireland, proclaim the taste of our ancestors for architecture.

Gothic architecture was introduced into Ireland about the beginning of the eleventh century; for Christ's church was rebuilt according to this order, A. D. 1038, as were the cathedrals of Waterford, Limerick and Cork, in 1104. The cathedrals of Cashel and Ardfert, as well as the abbey of Holy Cross, are lasting monuments of the ancient Gothic grandeur that distinguished the superstructures of Ireland. The monastic ruins of Ardfert, in the county of Kerry, are among the noblest in Ireland. We are told by Colgan, that when St. Brandon taught in the famous university of Ardfert, in 935, it contained 900 students, among whom were six foreign princes. A feeling antiquarian cannot see the broken columns and ivy-clad ruins of the ancient capital of Kerry, without execrating the memories of an Elizabeth and a Cromwell, and exclaiming in the language of the Irish poet, "the majestic Denham,"

"Who sees these dismal heaps but will demand,
What barbarous invader sacked the land?"

Near the cathedral was an anchorite tower, the loftiest and finest

* TORNA EIGIS, a writer who flourished in the fourth century, states that the marble statues of 200 Irish monarchs filled the niches of the grand gallery of Tara, in his time; and from the life of St. Bridget, written by Cogitosus, we learn that her body and that of St. Conlaith, were placed in monuments exquisitely sculptured, and adorned with precious stones. Cambrensis, an avowed enemy of our country, says, in his *Topography of Ireland*, that he saw in the very church of Kildare described by Cogitosus, "a concordance of the four gospels; the writing, but particularly the capital letters so highly ornamented, that neither the pencil of an Apelles, nor the chisel of a Lysippus ever formed the like: in a word, they seem to have been executed by something more than a mortal hand." Speaking of the weapons of the Irish, the same writer says, "they use spears, javelins, and great battle axes, which are exceedingly well tempered, and brilliantly polished." Nennius, a British writer of the ninth century, bestows great praise on the taste of the Irish in sculpture. In 1692, a crown of gold was found in the county of Tipperary, of the most exquisite workmanship; this diadem was preserved in the castle of Anglure, in France, until 1804, when a Parisian artist, admiring the sterling quality of its gold, wrought it in the imperial crown of Napoleon. In 1744, another crown, weighing ten ounces, was discovered in the bog of Cullen,

in the kingdom, being 128 feet high ; it fell suddenly, in 1771. In the ruined abbey are the ancient tomb of Mr. O'Connell's ancestors, as well as that of a branch of the O'Connor family. The inscriptions on the altars of these monuments, are cut in bass-relief, in an elegant and masterly manner.

The cathedrals of Armagh and Downpatrick, for elegance of Roman architecture, and magnitude of size, surpassed, we assert on the credit of antiquarians, all other ecclesiastical edifices erected by St. Patrick, in Ireland. In the cathedral of Armagh, the Grecian and Roman orders were happily combined in their most imposing features, to suit the solemn genius of the structure. The saint built this cathedral on the model of St. Peter's, at Rome, in the original form of that edifice as it stood in the days of the Emperor Constantine, who first reared that noble pile to commemorate the celestial cross which he had witnessed before his victory over Maxentius. The disposition, according to the drawings of Ware and Bishop Usher, of St. Peter's, was closely followed by St. Patrick, in Armagh. The interior was divided into five aisles, running from east to west, terminated at the end by another aisle or transept, from north to south ; in the centre or transection of which there was a semicircular niche for the altar, vaulted and elegantly enriched with elaborate mosaics and inlaid marbles. The vaulting of the ceiling was decorated also with mosaic and lacunary, or fretted enrichments ; and the sculptural embellishments of the columns and arches, were in a corresponding style of taste and elegant workmanship. Over the intersection of the aisles and the transept, the steeple was raised to the elevation of fifty feet, in the form of a square tower, and above this height the spire resembled a Roman temple. It was adorned with three porticos, to each of which there was attached a colonnade of Ionic pillars, whose capitals and entablature sculpture made eloquent with scriptural and martyrological history ; and its pediment typical at once of the cardinal virtues and religious attributes. The arches were semicircular, and ornamented with a mitred head, in bass-relief, and enriched with Roman mouldings, elegantly carved in limestone ; in fine, the prominent features of Roman architecture were visible in the columns, entablatures, architraves, frieze and cornice, and equally diffused over the whole mass and details of the building. The successors of St. Patrick, in the Metropolitan prelacy, made great improvements in the cathedral, and founded many abbeys in Armagh ; but in 858, Turgesius, the cruel Dane, plundered their shrines, and burned the cathedral and a great part of the city. The cathedral was rebuilt by Archbishop Catasaeli, in 884, in more than its pristine grandeur of architecture ; but this devoted edifice was again despoiled and burned by the Danes, A. D. 1004 ; but shortly after, like a Phœnix, rose once more in its original splendour, under the auspicious liberality of Brian Boroihme, the monarch of Ireland, and the zeal of Archbishop Amalgaid. Patrick Scanlan,

county of Tipperary, which was equal to the other in structure and decoration. The gorgets of gold, and gold handled swords, curiosities, and massy goblets, which are frequently dug up in Ireland, furnish an indisputable testimony of the luxury of the ancient Irish, in this precious metal.

who was primate in 1262, enlarged and beautified the cathedral, and it remained in the form in which he had left it, until the celebrated Lord Rokeby filled the archiepiscopal throne of Armagh, in 1778, when he enlarged the aisles, improved the roof, and adorned one of the fronts with a beautiful Gothic portico. This prelate was as eminent for his architectural taste as he was for his tolerant principles and munificent liberality. It might be said of him, that he found Armagh a city of miserable houses, constructed of stone and wicker work, and that "he left it a city of marble." He not only expended the entire of his episcopal revenues, but a great part of his hereditary income, in raising public edifices, and making ornamental improvements in Armagh, which he has transformed from a swampy desert to a paradise of architectivè grandeur and sylvan beauty; for it is conceded by all travellers, that Armagh is the handsomest inland city in Ireland.*

In the sixth century, according to Colgan and Bishop Usher, there were eleven hundred stone churches in Ireland, built in a massive style of architecture. We are free to admit, that many of the Druidical temples were converted into edifices for Christian worship, as all our antiquarians assert that the country abounded with Druidical structures when St. Patrick arrived in Ireland. We believe it is a fact that cannot be contested, that there was no stone building erected in England until the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons, who first dedicated temples to their deities, in that country. Tacitus, in the life of his father-in-law, Agricola, states that the Britons had no brick houses, temples, or *fora*, as the people lived in dwellings composed of "wattles and clay," covered with straw. Indeed, Bishop Warburton, in his essays on architecture, admits the accuracy of the Roman historian. The Saxons worshipped *Odin*, and the remains of the temples in which they adored him, exhibit every characteristic trait of the Roman style of architecture; so that the Saxons, like the Goths, have unjustly obtained the credit of being the founders of a new order of architecture; as it is certain that what are called the Saxon ornaments and the Saxon style, have not

* ARMAGH, a small, but handsome city, the capital of the county, is situated agreeably on the river Blackwater, at the distance of 82 English miles N. from Dublin, and 32 S. of Londonderry. The population of the county and city of Armagh, in 1831, amounted to 223,768. The archiepiscopal palace, adorned with all the grace and grandeur which sculpture and architecture could stamp upon marble, will long remain a monument of the taste and munificence of Lord Rokeby. This elegant structure, which is situated on an eminence, in the midst of an enchanting domain, is ninety by sixty, and forty-eight feet high; and exhibits in its design and details, the effect, magnificence and lightness of Ionic architecture; and its imposing appearance is not marred by the addition of wings, which generally detract so much from the beauty and grandeur of other edifices in Ireland. Large and ample offices are conveniently placed behind a plantation at a small distance. The immense lawns, decorated with clumps of flowery shrubs, and diversified with cascades, grottoes, rustic bridges, and serpentine promenades, arched with arborescent foliage, extend to a distant perspective, which is terminated on every side by waving groves and floral bowers. The principal front of the palace is adorned with a splendid portico of Galway marble, which is ascended by a flight of steps. The hall is enriched with all the attributes of painting and sculpture. On the staircase, at the landing, are Ionic pilasters, between which are large cornices, with groups of figures, representing Religion, Virtue, Charity, Painting, Sculpture and Architecture.

the most distant relation to that people as inventors, but as they were used in ages in which they were distinguished for their conquest and power.

Indeed, the obscurity in which the origin of Gothic architecture is involved, has elicited a great spirit of inquiry, given birth to various conjectures, and called into action the most ingenious researches of learned men, but without removing the thick veil of uncertainty that conceals it from the inquisitive eye of investigation. Some writers suppose that when the Goths had conquered Spain, and the genial warmth of the climate, and the religion of the old inhabitants, had kindled their genius and inflamed their mistaken piety, they struck out a new species of architecture, unknown to Greece and Rome, upon original principles, and ideas much nobler than what had given birth even to classical elegance; while others contend that this species of architecture is but a corrupt mixture of the Grecian and Roman orders, introduced first into Normandy by the knights templars and the crusaders of Palestine.* "The Anglo-Saxons were partly," says Bede, "converted to Christianity by Irish missionaries, antecedent to the coming of St. Augustine, in 597." The first Christian edifice for divine worship, was built by Irish architects, at Withern, in 603; and after it was finished they were also employed, in 610, to build St. Paul's, on the foundation of the old temple of Diana. We have the authority of English historians to say, that St. Wilfrid, bishop of York, who built the church of Hexham, in 674, sent to Ireland for architects to construct it. We adduce these facts to show that we were then the instructors and civilizers of the English nation. It is to us she is indebted for the rudiments of ecclesiastical architecture, and for those antique sculptures which so profusely adorn her pediments and arches.† The

* "It would be hard," says Dr. Milner, "to determine why the pointed style of architecture is called Gothic, as it does not certainly owe its origin to the Goths." Vide *Essay on Gothic Architecture*. "All the barbarian nations were called Goths. I think that what is called Gothic architecture originated with the Moors, in Spain, who took their ideas of columns, pilasters, or ramifications of the vaultings, from their grove-temples; for could the arches be otherwise than pointed, when the workmanship was to imitate the curve which branches make by their intersection with one another? Is not the long vista or aisle, in a Gothic cathedral, like an avenue of well grown trees?" Vide *Bishop Warburton's account of Gothic Architecture*. "To induce us to acquiesce in this extraordinary notion, he ought to have proved that the Goths practised grove-worship."—CHAMBERS.

† "GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE," writes a very learned Irish antiquarian, "rose in Ireland to the zenith of its splendour in the building of the cathedrals of Cashel, Limerick and Killaloe, about the middle of the eleventh century, and in the abbeys of Jerpoint, Boyle, Mellifont, and in many others, that existed in Ireland before Strongbow's invasion. In the ecclesiastical edifices of this period we perceive the imperfect triumph of that beautiful style of pointed architecture so long known in Europe by the appellation of *Gothic*, a term, however, which the architectural antiquaries of the present age, seem generally disposed to reject. For ourselves, we cordially concur in the opinion of those authors—and they are far the greater and more judicious number—who derive the pointed arch style from the east, and suppose it to have been introduced immediately after the crusades." * * * * "The advocates of the early origin of the pointed style in Gothic architecture," says Dr. Edward Clarke, "will have cause enough for triumph in the Cyclopean gallery, at Tiryns, exhibiting 'lancet arches' almost as ancient as the time of Abraham." And he afterwards observes that "it is evident that the acute or lancet arch is, in fact, the *oldest* form of arch known in the world, and

castles or fortifications of the Irish chiefs were raised in the area of what they called a *dun*, (a fortress) which was surrounded by a deep trench, its ramparts, or banks, were strongly impaled with wooden stakes.

"The old Irish chiefs," writes MOORE, "took up their abodes in *raths*, or hill fortresses, and belonged evidently to a period when cities were not yet in existence. Of these there are still to be found numerous remains throughout the country. This species of earthen work is distinguished from the artificial mounds, or tumuli, by its being formed upon natural elevations, and always surrounded by a rampart." We believe that it is now pretty generally conceded that the Norman towers and portcullis-defended draw bridge were first introduced into Ireland by the English invaders.

We have already descanted on the architectural magnificence and beauty of the palaces of Tara and Emania. Mr. Moore, in answering the charges made by English historians, asserting that they were composed of wood, argumentatively writes in relation to them, thus:—"It was among a people thus little removed from the state of the Germans in the time of Tacitus, that the palaces of Tara and Emania, as authentic records leave us but little room to doubt, displayed their regal halls, and, however scepticism may now question their architectural merits, could boast the admiration of many a century in evidence of their grandeur. That these edifices were merely of wood, is by no means conclusive either against the elegance of their structure, or the civilization, to a certain degree, of those who erected them. It was in wood that the graceful forms of Grecian architecture first unfolded their beauty; and there is reason to believe that, at the time when Xerxes invaded Greece, most of her temples were still of this perishable material.

Not to lay too much stress, however, on these boasted structures of ancient Ireland, of which there is but dry and meagre mention by her annalists, and most hyperbolical descriptions by her bards, there needs no more striking illustration of the strong contrasts which her antiquities present, than that, in the very neighbourhood of the earthen rath and the cave, there should rise proudly aloft those wonderful round towers, bespeaking, in their workmanship and presumed purposes, a connexion with religion and science, which marks their builders to have been of a race advanced in civilization and knowledge,—a race different, it is clear, from any of those who are known, from time to time, to have established themselves in the country, and, therefore, most probably, the old aboriginal inhabitants, in days when the arts were not yet strangers on their shores."

that examples of it may be referred to in buildings erected before the war of Troy. '*Lancet arches*' are to be found also in the *Cyclopean buildings of Ireland*, as well as in many of the early churches and round towers in which that style was still preserved." "When men inquire," says Horace Walpole, "who invented Gothic buildings, they might as well ask, who invented bad Latin? The former was a corruption of the Roman architecture, as the latter was of the Roman language. Beautiful Gothic architecture was engrafted on Saxon deformity, and pure Italian succeeded to vitiated Latin." A century and a half before the arrival of the English, the cathedral of Tuam, and the beautiful church of Disert, county of Clare, as well as the monastery of the Holy Cross, erected A. D. 1110, presented noble specimens of that style of architecture known by the different appellations of Gothic, Norman and Lombard.

It is time we should now speak of the round towers, which are, in a manner, peculiar to Ireland, and which have occupied the ingenuity of so many learned antiquarians to explain their original use. Some have attributed their erection to the Danes, who are supposed to have used them as telegraphs, by placing a light in the aperture on their convex roof; others say, among whom is the learned Vallancey, that they were built by the Milesian Druids, as fire-altars; but Dr. Milner very justly rejects this opinion, by observing, "that there was no occasion of carrying them up to so great a height as 130 feet."* A third system is, that they were watch-towers, raised in times of intestine warfare, to prevent an enemy from taking the *dun* of the chief by *coup de main*; another hypothesis is that of Molyneaux and Dr. Ledwich, who maintain with a great force of reason, and an air of strong probability, that they were belfries to the churches, near which they are situated. To this well founded conjecture we subscribe, because there is not one of these towers in Ireland which is not quite contiguous to a religious edifice; a fact that sustains the probability that the round towers were belfries, and built simultaneously with their adjoining churches. Smith brings another proof to the support of this opinion, in his history of Waterford, published in 1746, when he tells us, "that there was no doubt but the round tower of Ardmore was used originally for a belfry, there being towards the top not only four opposite windows to let out the sound, but also three pieces of oak still remaining, on which the bell was hung; there were also two channels cut in the sill of the door, where the rope came out, the ringer standing below the door, on the outside." It is also to be observed, that the doors of these towers are uniformly elevated fifteen feet above their base, which has led to the conclusion that the Christian pastor was in the habit of addressing the people from these high vestibules. It is the opinion of antiquarians, that these round towers were built in the sixth century, which has given birth to an argument, that, in that case, they could not be originally intended for belfries, because bells were not introduced into the Christian churches until the seventh century; but this argument will vanish before the historical fact, that during the pontificate of Pope Stephen, the congregations were called to church by the sound of trumpets; so that the Irish round towers might be trumpet-stands before the invention of bells. The late Dr. Milner, it is true, worked hard to subvert this theory; he says "that none of these towers are large enough for a single bell, of a moderate size, to swing round in it." Now, with all due

* "The round towers of Ireland," says an Irish writer of historical learning and antique research, "are great puzzlers to the antiquarians. Quires of paper, as tall as a tower, have been covered with as much ink as might form a Liffey, in accounting for their origin and use." "In despair of being able to ascertain at what period, and by whom they were constructed," says MOORE, "our antiquaries are reduced to the task of conjecturing the purposes of their construction. That they may have been appropriated to religious uses, in the early ages of the church, appears highly probable from the policy adopted by the first Christians, in all countries, of enlisting in the service of the new faith the religious habits and associations of the old. It is possible, therefore, that they might, at some period, have been used as stations for pilgrims,—for to this day, it is certain that the prayers said at stations, are called *Turrish* or pilgrim prayers."

respect for a man who, in antiquarian lore and philosophical ingenuity, was equal to any writer of his age, we would deferentially observe, that the diameter of our towers within, at the base, is generally nine feet; suppose they diminish at the top to four, it will be found that a bell of considerable size, but of rounder shape than that now used, might very well be suspended and rang, so as to emit a loud sound. The idea that they were built by the Danes is now universally scouted and abandoned; because if they had been erected by them, we would find structures of the same model in England, Scotland, or Denmark. Indeed, if we except the round steeple of the church of Aix-la-Chapelle, there is no other erection in Europe that bears an architectural resemblance to the round towers of Ireland.*

Harris and Dean Richardson concur in the supposition, that they were originally the residence of anchorite monks; and Harris, to strengthen the supports and props of this opinion, tells us, "that Donchad O'Brien, abbot of Clonmacnois, shut himself up in one of these exalted cells, in the seventh century." Dr. Milner advances very specious and ingenious arguments to sustain the conjecture of Richardson and Harris. It would be hard to define their order of architecture; for they are, as their name imports, perfectly round, both on the outside and in the inside, and carried up in this form to the height of from 50 to 130 feet; they are generally built of chiselled limestone, and their masonry displays taste and elegance of workmanship, which are not to be met with in the buildings of modern times.

All the round towers exhibit the same mode and plan of building; as if the one was a *fac-simile* of the other. They are all divided into stories of different heights; the floors supported in some by projecting stones, in others by joists put in the wall at building, and in many they were placed upon rests. There is a door into them, at the height of from 10 to 16 feet; and in the intermediate space of the stories there are a few loop-holes, which served, perhaps, for the admission of light and air. Near the top of each tower, there are usually four of these loop-holes, corresponding, in general, with the four cardinal points of the compass. The round tower of Roscrea, in the county of Tipperary, is admitted to be the finest specimen of this singular species of architecture in Ireland; the limestone blocks of which it is built are cut with mathematical exactness, and laid with such nicety in the wall, as to render the joints scarcely perceptible. Giraldus Cambrensis, in his *Topography of Ireland*, written in 1185, calls our round towers "*ecclesiastical edifices*, which were built shortly after the mission of St. Patrick." "They are," he adds, "built in a style or fashion peculiar to Ireland; being narrow, high, and round." It would require a greater space, and more time than we can afford the sub-

* Let it be remembered that the church of Aix-la-Chapelle was, it is recorded, built under the superintendence of an Irish missionary, in the reign of the Emperor Charlemagne, in the beginning of the ninth century, and that as a memorial of his native land, and a preserver of dear and patriotic association, he caused the steeple to be built in imitation of the round towers of his country.

ject in this history, to advert to the different opinions that writers have expressed relative to the round towers of Ireland; but we think that their very name in the Irish language (*Clog-teagh*) which signifies in English, the *Bell-house*, should silence all objections and doubts as to the use of their origin. "The reasons," says the learned Dr. Milner, "assigned for attributing these works to foreigners, namely, the supposed rudeness of the ancient Irish, is evidently ill-founded. For can we suppose that the tutors of the English, French, and Germans, in the learned languages, the sciences, and music, as the Irish are known to have been during four centuries, were incapable of learning how to build plain round towers of stone, when they saw their scholars all around them, erecting stately churches and monasteries of stone; most of which, we are assured, were ornamented with towers." The Doctor might have added, that the carved architraves and sculptured entablatures of our churches, in the beginning of the sixth century, when the unlettered English and Picts were benighted in the gloom of barbarous idolatry, show that literature and the arts kept pace with the progress of a mind-elevating religion and a sublime morality, in Ireland.*

We subjoin a catalogue of the principal round towers in Ireland, which will, we think, impart a certain degree of local interest to our history—to relieve, in some measure, the unavoidable monotony of this subject.

Aghadoe, in the county of Kerry,	is	95 feet high.
Aghagower	" Mayo,	" 110
Antrim,	" Antrim,	" 85
Ardfert,	" Kerry,	" 90
Ardmore,	" Waterford,	110
Ballygaddy,	" Galway,	" 90
Ball,	" Sligo,	" 110
Boyle,	" Roscommon	110
Cashel,	" Tipperary,	80
Castledermot,	" Kildare,	" 90

* The stone cross of Tuam, a part of which still exists,—the statues of the twelve apostles at the cathedral of Cashel, the grand archway of Mellifont abbey, and the beautiful tracery and enrichments of many other ruins in Ireland, remain yet as proofs that the ancient Irish artists carried sculpture to a perfection, in the tenth century, which no nation in Europe could then equal. BREWER, an English tourist, to whose fair and impartial description of Ireland, we have, in the course of this history, frequently adverted with gratitude, says of King Cormac's chapel, erected in the tenth century, on the Rock of Cashel, county of Tipperary, "It is the most perfect vestige of circular architecture remaining in Ireland. The sculptural and carved ornaments are numerous; and besides, the nail headed, the chevron, and other mouldings familiar with the Anglo-Saxons, they comprise the heads of men and beasts, together with fanciful devices. The door-ways are richly decorated. The columns are short and massive; they are covered with a lozenge net work, and have varied capitals." Notwithstanding the numerous monuments of our ancient architecture, two base and venal historians, Ledwich, and that living apostate, TAYLOR, to gratify English prejudice, asserted it as their opinion, "that there was no stone churches in Ireland, prior to the arrival of the English!!" But why should we look for truth, honour, or patriotism, from such bribed recreants? Irish traitors are the most degraded of men! Boston, June 14, 1836.

Clondalkin, in the county of Dublin,	is	90 feet high.
Clones,	“ Monaghan,	110
Cloyne,	“ Cork,	“ 110
Devenish,	“ Fermanagh,	90
Downpatrick,	“ Down,	“ 110
Drumcliff,	“ Sligo,	“ 90
Drumiskin,	“ Louth,	“ 130
Drumlahan,	“ Cavan,	“ 90
Dysart,	“ Queen’s,	“ 90
Ferbane, (two)	“ King’s,	“ 110
Glendaloch,*	“ Wicklow,	“ 110
Kildare,	“ Kildare,	“ 110
Kilkenny,	“ Kilkenny	“ 110
Kilfala,	“ Mayo,	“ 110
Kilree,	“ Kilkenny,	“ 90
Kells,	“ Meath,	“ 100
Limerick,	“ Limerick,	“ 110
Lusk,	“ Dublin,	“ 110
Melic,	“ Galway,	“ 92
Moat,	“ Sligo,	“ 95
Monasterboice,	“ Louth,	“ 110
Oran,	“ Roscommon,	92
Rathmichael,	“ Dublin,	“ 95
Roscrea,	“ Tipperary,	80
Scattery,	“ Clare,	“ 95
Sligo, (two)	“ Sligo,	“ 110
Swords,	“ Dublin,	“ 92
Timahoe,	“ Queen’s,	“ 92
Tulloherin,	“ Kilkenny,	“ 92
Turlogh,	“ Mayo,	“ 110
West-Carbury,	“ Cork,	“ 92
Taghadoo,	“ Kildare,	“ 96

Our ancient chieftains had many stone castles before the arrival of the English, particularly the castle of Tuam, which was designated “the wonderful,” erected by Turlogh O’Connor, king of Ireland, A. D. 1150,—the castle of Ross,† county of Kerry, erected in the eleventh century, by O’Donoghue,—Blarney, county of Cork, built by McCarthy, prince of Desmond, A. D. 1138,—Lyons, county of Cork, built 1142, by the O’Lehans,—Margaret, county of Mayo, built by the O’Maillys, A. D. 1139,—Monaghan, built by the

* This tower approaches the Ivy church so near, that it communicates with St. Kevin’s kitchen, at the western portal, which convinces us in a more satisfactory manner than fine-spun hypotheses or ingenious conjectures, of the original purpose to which round towers were devoted.

† ROSS CASTLE, (in Irish, *Caislean Ross*, the castle of the promontory,) which is situated on an isthmus, in the lake of Killarney, was built by O’Donoghue, at the period mentioned in the text. In the wars of 1641, it made a resolute and brave defence, under Lord Muskerry, against the parliamentary generals, at the head of 6,000 men, Ludlow, Broghill and Waller, and it had the honour of being the last fortress in Munster that surrendered to the regicides. Ross castle has been repaired in the last century, and it is now a barrack for two companies of foot soldiers. From Ross castle the lakes and their charming scenery, can be seen under their most fascinating aspect.

McMahons, in the year 1136,—Enniskillen, county of Fermanagh, built by the Maguires, A. D. 1144,—Kelly, near Athlone, county Westmeath, built by the Mageoghans, A. D. 1150,—castle Dermot, county of Kildare, built in the year 1163, by Prince O'Toole,—castle Cargan, county of Leitrim, built by O'Rourke, A. D. 1169,—castle Connor, county of Sligo, built by the O'Connors, A. D. 1155,—castle Buy, county of Down, built by the Magennises, in the year 1148,—Cashel, county of Tipperary, built by Cormac Mac-cuilnan, king of Munster, A. D. 903,—and Carlow, built by the O'Kavanaghs, A. D. 1139. These, and many other castles, which we might name, is a sufficient proof that Ireland was not only studded with stone churches and abbeys, but with feudal castles of that material, anterior to the invasion of the English. In a preceding chapter to this history, we have described the sepulchral monuments of Ireland.

THE RUDE STONY MONUMENTS. The *cromleacs*, (the bent stones) are to be found in almost every county of Ireland, as they were, as is supposed, used by the Druids as altars of human sacrifices. These massy and rugged monuments are generally composed of three and five upright stones, indented in the ground,—over these is placed a broad sloping flag, generally varying in length from ten to fifteen feet. Some of these tabular rocking stones (so called because they are balanced, as if placed on a pivot, and so easily set in motion that the pressure of the hand will make them incline to either point,) are from four to six tons weight.* On every one of these horizontal slabs is cut a channel about four inches deep, which served, as is conjectured, to receive the blood of the victims. Underneath these huge erections is generally found a cavity, where, it is supposed, the confidant of the Druidical priest concealed himself to prompt the latter in his mock divinations. MR. MOORE, in his observations on these monuments, says—"That most common of all Celtic monuments, the cromleac, which is to be found not only in most parts of Europe, but also in Asia, and exhibits, in strength and simplicity of its materials, the true character of the workmanship of antiquity, is likewise to be found, in various shapes and sizes, among the monuments of Ireland. Of these I shall only notice such as have attracted most the attention of our antiquaries. In the neighbourhood of Dundalk, county of Louth, we are told of a large cromleac, or altar, which fell to ruin some time since, and whose site, (Balbrichan) is described as being by the side of a river, 'between two Druid groves.' On digging beneath the ruins, there was found a great part of the skeleton of a human figure, which bore the appearance of having been originally enclosed in an urn. There were also, mixed up with the bones, the fragments of a broken wand, which was supposed to have been a part of the insignia of the person there interred, and might possibly have been

* There is an immense cromleac in Tobinstown, county of Carlow, whose standing pillars are eight feet high, and its tabular stone is twenty-three feet long, and eight in breadth. Perhaps the next cromleac, in magnitude and elevation, to those of Louth and Carlow, is *Leabad-Caillioic*, (the hag's bed) situated near Glanworth, county of Cork. The covering stone is nearly sixteen feet in length, seven in width, and three in thickness.

the badge of the Druidical office which is still called in Ireland, the conjuror's or Druid's wand. In the neighbourhood (at Ballymascanlan) of this ruined cromleac, is another, called by the inhabitants, the '*Giant's Load*,' from the tradition attached to most of these monuments, that they were the works of giants in times of old. The ruinous remains of the circular temple near Dundalk, formed a part, it is supposed, of a great work, like that at Stonehenge, being open, as we are told, to the east, and composed of similar circles of stone within. One of the old English traditions respecting Stonehenge, is that the stones were transported thither from Ireland, having been brought to the latter country by giants from the extremities of Africa; and in the time of Giraldus Cambrensis, there was still to be seen, as he tells, on the plain of Kildare, an immense monument of stones, corresponding exactly in appearance and construction with that of Stonehenge." In every barony of the country will be found circles of upright stones ranged around like that of Stonehenge. Within the circumference of these circles, the Druids, according to the opinion of our best antiquarians, held their periodical convocations. "The Hibernian circles," writes BREWER, "are in a good state of preservation, and are sometimes connected with unusual and curious particulars. As an example may be noticed the stone pillars arranged in a circular form round a tumulous, at New Grange, in the county of Meath, beneath which mount was constructed an extensive gallery, appearing to have been devoted to religious and sepulchral purposes. It is also observable that within some circles are found stone seats, or chairs, traditionally termed *brehon's* or *judge's seats*." These circles are invariably found in Ireland, situated on high eminences. In several parts of the kingdom are likewise to be seen, solitary or duplicated, unwrought pillars of stone of ponderous dimensions, which generally rise to an elevation of twelve feet above the surface of the earth. At Kilgowan, in the county of Kildare, near Kilkullen, stands a noble specimen of these Druidical monuments.* We have before spoken of the Irish tumuli, raths and carns, as well as of the caves.

THE ORNAMENTS OF THE ANCIENT IRISH. All the ancient knights wore *torques*, or twisted collars of gold, exquisitely wrought. The bracelets and amulets (many of which have been from time to time, dug up in every part of the kingdom,†) display exquisite workman-

* The pillar stone of Kilgowan, stands on an elevated hill, and is twelve feet high, and four feet thick. The now little village of Kilkullen, county of Kildare, was once a place of monastic and military consequence, as it contained an abbey, and was enclosed by embattled walls, through which there were seven gated entrances. Here are the remains of a round tower, and of two stone crosses which were finely sculptured. The country around it is handsome, particularly the banks of the Liffey. It is 26 miles from Dublin.

† "About a century ago," writes an Irish antiquarian, "an Irish *bull*, or amulet, was found in the bog of Allen, which is now deposited in the valuable museum of Irish antiquities of the dean of St. Patrick's. It is in the shape of a heart, of solid gold, beautifully embossed and ornamented. Among the Romans the *bullae* were not only suspended from the necks of young men, but also of horses." Another Irish antiquary says of the *torques*, "two of these beautiful collars were dug up about the year 1811, in the vicinity of Tara, and purchased from the fortunate finder by the late Alderman West, of Skinner-Row, Dublin, whose son sold them

ship. The ancient Irish of rank also wore golden breast-plates, belts and rings.

THE STATE OF THE FINE ARTS BEFORE THE COMING OF THE ENGLISH.* In a preceding chapter we have shown to what a pitch of excellence our ancestors carried sculpture and architecture, antecedent to the Saxon invasion.† The frescoes in the churches of Cashel, Kildare, Kilkenny, and the abbeys of Jerpoint and Knockmoy,‡ though decayed by seven centuries, are still fine. These frescoes are mellow and brilliant in their colouring, and the artists, in design, execution and composition, evinced an intimate acquaintance with classical forms. The frescoes of Knockmoy, which can be seen on the walls of the north chancel of the abbey, are valuable to the antiquarian, as they present the exact dress worn by the Irish in the eleventh century.

Having given the preceding sketch of the arts, we will put a period to this chapter by laying before the reader a short relation of our learned men of the twelfth century.

Gilbert, who was bishop of Limerick, in the year 1110, was so famous for his literary and theological attainments, that the Pope invited him to Rome, and conferred upon him the exalted office of legate. He assisted in the consecration, at Westminster, of Bernard, bishop of Menevia, in A. D. 1115. His writings consist of epistles, and a history of the state of the Irish Church in his day. Archbishop Usher compiled his works, and appended to them critical notes. He died about the year 1157. Celsus, archbishop of Armagh, a prelate of mental power and eloquence, in A. D. 1159, wrote a theological summary, and, as Bale states, divers letters, and the constitution of the famous synod of Usneagh,§ held A. D. 1158, of

to his Royal Highness, the Duke of Sussex." STEWART, in his History of Armagh, says, "in the year 1797, a golden tiara was found in the drained bed of Loughadian, near Pointz-pass, and is yet in the possession of William Fivey, Esq."

* MR. PERNIE, an accomplished antiquarian and artist, observes—"Traces of arts and sciences are exhibited abundantly in the numerous antiquities of gold, silver and bronze, dug up every day in all parts of Ireland, and similar to the most ancient remains of Greeks, Egyptians and Phœnicians. Our golden crowns, collars, bracelets, anklets,—our brazen swords, spears, and domestic vessels,—our cinerary urns,—our sepulchral chambers, which are not to be paralleled in the British isles. These are the evidences of the early colonization of Ireland by a civilized people."

† Mr. Pernie again writes—"Our gold and silver ornaments, bronze weapons, are often elegant in design and workmanship,—and some of our sepulchral urns, ornamented with devices and mouldings in bass-relief, show, at least, an acquaintance with the forms in use among a refined people. In an ancient shrine still preserved in the county of West Meath, are two bronze figures,—one, an Irish warrior helmeted, and wearing the *Philibeg* or *Kilt*, (the Scotch, as Pinkerton, their own historian, admits, borrowed that form of costume from the Irish.) The next figure is obviously that of an ecclesiastic, and is exceedingly curious for the richness of the ornaments on the robe. For ages after the introduction of Christianity, the arts, though no doubt corrupt, had still a touch of the Greek and Roman glory, were employed in the building and decorating of churches, and other religious edifices,—the illuminating of religious books,—the carving of tombs and crosses, and above all, the manufacture in brass, and other metals, of shrines, crosses, croziers, and other sacred utensils."

‡ KNOCKMOY, now a small hamlet village, is situated in the barony of Tiaquin, county of Galway. The abbey, and the O'Connor tomb, are rapidly going to decay and ruin.

§ USNEAGH is a lofty mountain in the barony of Rathconrath, in the county of

which he was president. The year of that prelate's death is not given by Sir James Ware. Malachy, his successor in the archiepiscopal see, was a native of Ulster, and partly educated at Armagh, under Imar, the abbot, and partly at Lismore, under Machus, the bishop of that diocess. On his return to Ulster, after receiving holy orders, he took up his residence in the abbey of Bangor, in the county of Down, where he had not been long ere his literary talents and saintly piety recommended him to the brotherhood as a person every way worthy of being elected abbot. In the course of two years, at the dying request of Archbishop Celsus, the Pope appointed him to the arch-prelacy. Two years after his elevation, he made a journey to Rome, and had the honour of being promoted by Pope Innocent II., to the official dignity of legate for Ireland. In the year 1148, he again set out for Rome; but on his way thither, he fell sick of a fever in the monastery of Clarevall, and died there on the 2d of November of that year. He was the author of a prophecy of the bishops of Rome, and of several other tracts. St. Bernard wrote his life. Congan, a Cistercian monk,* abbot of Suir, county of Tipperary, wrote, in the year 1151, epistles to St. Bernard, the biographer of St. Malachy. Murry, or Marian, a learned scholar, was abbot of Knock,† in the county of Louth. He wrote a supplement to the martyrology of Æneas. Maurice Regan, the historiographer of Dermot Macmurrough, king of Leinster, who was a poet and annalist, wrote a history of the affairs of Ireland during his own time, and a biography of Brian Boroihme. The former was translated into English by Sir George Carew, who was president of Munster during part of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Concubran, a friar of Armagh, famous for his powers of composition, wrote a biography of St. Modwen, who was abbess of Kelslieve, county of Armagh, A. D. 630. The year of Concubran's death, in the twelfth century, is not noted in the Irish annals. Sir James Ware says that his manuscript was, in his time, in the Cottonian Library. Eugene, bishop of Ardmore,‡ suffragan to the archbishop

Westmeath, where many of the Pagan kings of Ireland were interred,—and where the Druids held solemn religious festivals on every first day of May, in honour of *Beal*, or the sun. Here also the national estates often assembled to legislate and pronounce judgment on criminals. As we have already related, many of the kings of Ireland resided here.

* The CISTERCIAN order is a branch of the Benedictines, and was founded at Cistercium, in Burgundy, A. D. 1093, by St. Robert, a native of France, abbot of Molisnea. To the primitive rule of St. Benedict he added new statutes, prescribing a more strict life than was at that time observed; which soon after became greatly improved by the mellifluous Doctor St. Bernard, abbot of Clavallès. The learning, piety and zeal of those monks increased the brethren so much by drawing to Cistercium a vast number of ecclesiastics, that in a few years they branched out through the extent of 500 abbeys.

† KNOCK abbey is situated on the banks of the river Fane, county of Louth, at the distance of about four miles westward from Dundalk. It was originally founded by Donough O'Carroll, prince of Orgial, early in the eleventh century, and shortly after its erection it was amply endowed by Dr. Edan O'Kelly, bishop of Clogher.

‡ ARDMORE (the great hill) is situated in the barony of the Decies, county of Waterford. St. Declan made it a bishop's see in the year 448. Here are the ruins of two churches; over the portal of one of which, are to be still seen some curious figures in alto-relievo. Ardmore rises majestically over the sea; and the

of Cashel, possessed superior literary talents. His biography of St. Cuthbert, said to be admirably written, was in the Cottonian Library, in the age of Sir James Ware. He died about the year 1174.

CHAPTER LXVII.

Dissensions among the Irish Princes.—The amorous intrigue of Dermot, King of Leinster, with the Princess of Breffeny, who elopes with her paramour, while her husband, O'Rourke, is absent on a pilgrimage.—The injured husband claims the assistance of Roderick, the Monarch, to avenge his wrongs.—It is granted.—O'Rourke, at the head of a large force, marches to the palace of Dermot, who is obliged to fly to England, from whence he sailed to France, to claim the aid of Henry II, who authorizes the Irish Prince to enlist men in England.—The proclamation of Henry II.—Dermot secures the aid and alliance of the Welsh chieftains, Strongbow, Fitzstephens, Fitzgerald, Prendergast, Barry, Hervey, &c.—Landing of the English in Ireland.—Surrender of Waterford.—Dermot enters into a treaty of peace with the Monarch, which is soon violated by the King of Leinster.

AT this juncture, A. D. 1168, the Irish princes, as usual, were estranged and divided from each other by the spirit of ambition and rivalry. The O'Niels, or Hy-Nials of the north, as the legitimate descendants of Heremon, always claimed their legitimate and prior right to the Irish throne,—and against their pretensions Roderick O'Connor, the now possessor of the crown, opposed his regal power, force and coronation. In Munster, McCarthy, prince of Desmond, asserted his right to the crown of that province, and to enforce it, by the strength of the sword, he invaded Thomond, attacked Murrigh O'Brien, and killed him in battle.

But Roderick, the monarch, threatened McCarthy with the wrath of his vengeance, unless he speedily evacuated Thomond, and paid to his commissioners 3,000 oxen, as an eric for the death of O'Brien. McCarthy, not able to resist the monarch, complied with the requisition of Roderick. O'Brien's brother, Domhnal, ascended the throne of Munster. Dunleavy, a chieftain of Down, was at war with his rival, Magennis, for the sovereign sway of that country,—Maguire of Fermanagh, and O'Rourke of Leitrim, opposed each other with implacable jealousy for the same purpose. In fine, the whole country was dissevered and divided by unnatural intestine dissensions. Mr. Lawless, in his eloquent history of Ireland, in alluding and adverting to those unfortunate discords, writes,—“For a length of time previous to the invasion of Henry II., this country might have fallen an easy prey to the ambition of any foreign prince inclined to make the experiment. Torn and convulsed by factions, she would have been unable to struggle with the well regulated incursions of an invading enemy, and the errors of her children might have been the successful allies of Denmark, of Norway, of Sweden, or of England. But all these countries were then too

country behind it presents a striking assemblage of landscape beauties, to which a fine round tower, and the ruins of a castle, impart a picturesque character. Boston, June 20, 1836.

much occupied by more important interests, to allow them the opportunity of taking advantage of Ireland's follies and divisions. The mind and passions of Europe were carried down the torrent of religious fanaticism, and the wealth and enterprise of its principal kingdoms found ample employment in the wild and unprofitable struggles for the recovery of the holy land. The strength, the resources and value of Ireland were not, however, unknown or overlooked by the governments of surrounding nations : her people were celebrated for their valour, their hospitality, and their heroism : the English and the Welsh have fled for succour and protection to Ireland, and the three sons of Harold found a safe and hospitable asylum in this country, when pursued by the triumphant arms of William, the Conqueror. An Irish army contended on English ground, for the rights of Englishmen, against the merciless and despotic ambition of William ; and we are informed by Irish annalists, "that Murtough, the Irish monarch, was solicited by the Earl of Pembroke, (the father of Strongbow,) to defend him against the vengeance of Henry I. France assiduously courted Irish alliance ; and the formidable co-operation of this country with the enemy of England, first pointed out to Henry II. the policy of annexing Ireland to his English dominions."

While the strength of the country was thus distracted and disorganized, woman's spells and charms, which have, in all ages and nations, produced such tremendous consequences—given birth to such long and sanguinary wars, and revolutionized so many empires and states, prostrated at the feet of English invaders, the liberties and fortunes of Ireland. Dermot, king of Leinster, who had for some years clandestinely loved and enjoyed the favours of Devorghal, (in English, the fair Dervo) the wife of O'Rourke, prince of Breffeny,—a lady whose fatal beauties proved as disastrous to Ireland, as those of Helen did to Troy, on being secretly informed by his beloved mistress, that her husband had gone to Lough Dearg,*

* LOUGH DEARG (the red lake) is partly situated in the counties of Donegal and Fermanagh, and spreads out its silvery surface, as transparent as a Grecian mirror, to reflect the picturesque mountains whose basis form its rocky frame work. The acclivities of these mountains, from the water to the summit, are robed with a sylvan mantle of the most varied and spangled verdure. From every pendant cliff the most agreeable flowering shrubs hang in variegated garlands and fairy festoons, composed of an intermixture of the lilac, the laburnum, the moss rose, the sweet briar, the honeysuckle, and the lauristinus. The distance of this lake from Dublin is about 91 Irish miles, in a N. W. direction. In the middle of this lake is the island of the famous purgatory of St. Patrick, to which so many pious princes and heroes, from all parts of Europe, during a period of five centuries, made pilgrimages, to atone for their sins by prayer and penance. The island of the Priory, where the purgatory was first placed, was so called, because St. Dabec, one of the disciples of St. Patrick, erected a priory on it, in the fifth century. Shortly after its building, as Colgan, and the book of Donegal, inform us, the Irish apostle retired to one of its cells for the purpose of devotion ; but considering that cell too comfortable for the mortification he wished to inflict on himself, he made choice of another little island about a quarter of a mile distant from that of the Priory, where, with his own hands, he excavated the earth, and built a rustic cave of free-stone, which he covered with broad flags, and over them placed layers of green turf. That cave, part of which still exists, is 16 feet long, two broad, and three in height. We are told by Jocelyn, in his life of our national apostle, that whenever the saint would retire to the cave to fast and pray, that he

(*St. Patrick's purgatory*,) on a pilgrimage, he, warm with amorous passion, resolved to profit by O'Rourke's absence, quickly repaired to the lady's residence, in the county of Leitrim, and carried her off to his palace, at Ferns, in the county of Wexford. An Irish historian gives the following portrait of Dermot:—"Although he was fifty years of age when he carried off the princess of Breffeny, his appearance was still that of the most masculine youthfulness,—there was not a wrinkle to be seen on his brow, nor a grey hair on

previously gave orders to one of his servants to roll a large stone against the aperture, for the purpose of shutting out even the benefit of the air and sunbeams. After St. Patrick's death, the consecrated islands of Lough Dearg became the constant resort of hosts of pilgrims from every quarter of Europe. More penitents visited the holy cave of Lough Dearg, from the sixth to the thirteenth century, than bent the knee of devotional reverence before any other shrine in Europe. Alfred, king of England, on his return from the school of Mayo, to his own country, repaired, as we are told by Fleming, to Lough Dearg, and there piously offered up his prayers in the cave of St. Patrick. It is also a historical fact that when Godwin, earl of Kent, and his son, Harold, afterwards king of England, were banished by Edward, the confessor, in the year 1044, that they flew for refuge to Ireland, and that during their exile there, they, with several other of their noble adherents, went on a pilgrimage of piety, meekness and humility, to the miraculous cave of St. Patrick. Every year, from the sixth to the fifteenth century, added to the miraculous fame, and multiplied the religious pilgrims and penitents of St. Patrick's purgatory. The priory was enlarged and beautified in the eleventh century, and fifty friars, we are told by Jocelyn, were scarcely able to attend to the spiritual duties of the island. In A. D. 1497, the brothers of several convents and abbeys in Italy and France, petitioned the Pope to suppress and desecrate the priory on the island of Lough Dearg. In this petition they represented to the holy father, that their shrines and churches were literally deserted, as then the devout who were in the habit of visiting them, had all gone to Ireland, which reduced the brethren to the most deplorable state of indigence. The Sovereign Pontiff, Alexander VI., commiserating their distresses, issued out a Bull, addressed to John Kite, the primate of all Ireland, requiring of his Grace to deprive the prior and friars of Lough Dearg of all ecclesiastical functions within the lakes of Avog and Dearg. In consequence of this requisition, the prior of Donegal repaired to the lake, as the deputy of the archbishop, and expelled from both islands the prior of Lough Dearg, and all his brethren. The primate of Armagh, in order to carry the behest of the Pope into executive effect, promulgated a pastoral letter, in which he threatened to visit with excommunication, any person who should rebel against the church by visiting the abbey of St. Dabeoc, or the cave of St. Patrick. The abbey and cave, in consequence, remained closed until the accession, in A. D. 1516, of Pius III. to the pontifical throne. This pope, at the instance of George Cromer, archbishop of Armagh, and high chancellor of Ireland, recalled the bull of his predecessor, and issued out another, in which he granted plenary powers to the prior of Lough Dearg, which remain in full force with the friars who reside on the island, to this day. The next blow that was aimed at this abode of piety, religion and charity, was sped by Charles I., or rather by his factious Irish government, in the year 1631. The intolerant Protestant clergy of the north, envious at the multitude that repaired for devotion to the island, while their churches were comparatively empty, represented to that arch bigot of uncharitableness, Boyle, earl of Cork, and his *worthy* colleague, Viscount Ely, then Lord Justices, that the people assembled there for the purpose of fomenting sedition and treason. This base and barefaced calumny had the desired effect. An order from the Irish privy council was immediately issued for the demolition of the priory, and the expulsion of the friars from the island. But in 1793, when the oratorical and patriotic genius of Grattan made the vigour of the despotic penal laws relax under the pressure of the lever of public opinion, set in operation by the enlightened toleration of the age, a few pious friars built a small chapel on the site of the old priory; so that now the island, during every summer, is visited by hundreds of the devout and the faithful, not only from all the countries of Europe, but from America. Boston, June 21, 1836.

his head. His form was that of graceful proportion,—and his deportment and countenance were formed to allure a woman's eye and heart. His stature and bodily strength, together with a boisterous valour, had rendered him the admiration of all the inferior order of his subjects; and these, as the proper instruments of his ambition, he was careful to protect and favour."

When the confiding and unsuspecting O'Rourke returned to his home, in Leitrim, from his pilgrimage, "and learned," says McDermott, "the story of the violence done to his wife, as it then appeared from her artful exclamations, he applied to the monarch of Ireland for his assistance; Roderick thought the cause of resentment (as it had been represented) so great, that he assisted the king of Breffeny with some of his troops. These, together with his own forces, as well as those of Meath and Ossory, and even some in Leinster who had revolted, enabled him to march to the place of Dermot's residence, at Ferns.* The king of Leinster had, by his imprudence and tyranny, lost the affections of his people, and when, on receiving notice of the hostile preparations against him, he applied for assistance, their resentment was so violent, that all the chiefs renounced his authority, and put themselves under the protection of the monarch of Ireland. Thus abandoned in his distress, Dermot was obliged to insure his safety by flight, and become a voluntary exile. Passing over to Bristol with about sixty followers, he there heard that Henry II., king of England, was then in France, pursuing his conquests in that country. The king of Leinster accordingly repaired to Henry, in Guienne, and craving his assistance in restoring him to his sovereignty, offered, on that event, to hold his kingdom in vassalage under the crown of England."

On arriving at the camp of the English monarch, "he implored," writes Lawless, "the aid of the British king, and if supported by his arms in the assertion of his undoubted rights, promised to hold his recovered dominions in vassalage to Henry and his heirs." In consequence of the insurrection of Henry's French subjects, and the powerful rebellion of his brother, Geoffry, as well as the potent

* FERNs. In a preceding chapter we have written a description of the town of Ferns, in the county of Wexford, which was, for ages, the residence of the kings of Leinster, but it is now but an humble village. Dermot Macmurrough, who died on the 1st of May, 1771, was interred in an abbey, founded by himself, for canons regular following the rule of St. Augustine, A. D. 1167. "The memory of Dermot," writes BREWER, "has been so universally execrated by the Irish, throughout all ages since the English invasion, that the precise spot of his sepulture has afforded no object of curiosity with posterity, and is now quite unknown."

* * * In the abbey churchyard is an ancient stone cross, now broken in pieces. The upper part is applied as a head-stone, and the base and a portion of the shaft, cover the graves of unknown persons. The whole of the cross was adorned with elaborate sculpture, and bears a close resemblance to the monumental cross of Turlogh O'Connor, king of Ireland, at Clonmacnois, in the King's county. It would appear to be far from improbable that this is the cross which several authors mention to have been erected at Ferns, in honour of King Dermot Macmurrough; and it may be observed that the circumstance of its broken and neglected state, as being significant of the little respect paid to the memory of that prince, assists in adding to the rationality of such an opinion." Of the castle of Ferns, built by Strongbow, A. D. 1173, we will have occasion to speak hereafter, as it derives great interest and importance from its having been the scene of memorable historical events. Boston, June 25, 1836.

opposition of Archbishop Becket, of Canterbury, Henry, though long anxious to possess Ireland, had to defer his journey to that country for the present; but he assured Dermot of his determination to support him as speedily as possible; and, in order to enable him to raise an army in England, he gave to him the following proclamation.

“Henry, king of England, duke of Normandy and Aquitain, earl of Anjou, &c., unto all his subjects, English, Norman, Welsh and Scotch, and to all nations and people, being his subjects, *greeting* :

Whereas, Dermot, king of Leinster, was most wrongfully (as he informeth) banished out of his own country, hath craved our aid: therefore forasmuch as we have received him into our protection, grace and favour, whoever within our realms, subject to our command, will aid and help him, whom we have embraced as our trusty friend, for the recovery of his land, let him be assured of our grace and favour.”

“Mac Murchad,” writes O’Halloran, “had this proclamation frequently read, by sound of trumpet, in Bristol, &c., with little success, though he offered lands and money to those enlisting under his banners. After a month’s stay in Bristol, he retired to Wales, where he applied to Richard, earl of Strigule, commonly called Strongbow, then a powerful and popular chief in Wales, and offered him his daughter in marriage, and the reversion of his kingdom after his death, which he bound himself by an oath to perform, though the contract was void by the laws of the constitution, by the fundamentals of which, none could be candidate for the crown of Leinster but those of the line of Cathoir, the Great.”

Henry not only gave Dermot this proclamation, but treated him with the most marked honour and hospitality, and made him, previous to his departure, presents of great value. Dermot, encouraged and elated by the friendly assurances of the English monarch, returned once more to Bristol, where, for the purpose of enlisting English adventurers, he gave the most extended publicity then possible, to the king’s proclamation, accompanied with his own solemn promise of paying all who entered into his service to fight for the recovery of his throne and kingdom, not even high pay, but grants of tracts of land. These tempting offers attracted the notice of Richard, earl of Chepstow, or Pembroke, designated by his countrymen, for his courage and valour, “*Strongbow*.”

This nobleman had ruined his fortune by dissipation and profligate pleasures, and besides, he was out of King Henry’s favour, so that he readily, if not cheerfully, engaged to lead his kinsmen, Fitzstephen, Fitzgerald, Raymond le’ Gross, Prendergast, Mountmorres and Barry, as well as all his vassals, to Ireland.

By the compact drawn up between Dermot and Strongbow, the king of Leinster covenanted to give to the earl his only daughter and heiress, in marriage, together with his whole territories of Leinster, after his death.

As soon as Dermot formed this alliance, so flattering to his hopes of recovering the possession of his kingdom, he went to the church of St. David’s, in Wales, accompanied by his intended son-in-law,

and there prayed for success, and made a munificent offering at the altar. He then, with his followers, embarked for Ireland, having previously received positive assurances from Strongbow, and the other Welsh chieftains, that they would sail, with all their combined forces, for Ireland, early in the ensuing spring.

"He landed," writes LAWLESS, "at Wexford, where he lay concealed in a monastery, until the returning spring brought round the period at which the arrival and co-operation of the English allies were expected. Roderick, king of Ireland, hearing of the arrival of Dermot, immediately marched against the latter, and forced him to fly for shelter to the woods. Dermot, sensible of his inability to wage so unequal a war with Roderick, submitted to the Irish monarch, and gave hostages for his future peaceable and loyal conduct. Roderick agreed to the terms of submission, and again reposed confidence in his fidelity. These pledges of peace had not long been given by Dermot to Roderick, when his English allies appeared on the coast of Wexford. Robert Fitzstephen, with thirty knights, sixty men in armour, and three hundred archers, all chosen men of Wales, arrived in Ireland, at Feathard,* in the year 1170. The army was reinforced with ten knights, and two hundred archers, under the command of Maurice Prendergast, the valiant Welshman. The report of this formidable invasion, (formidable when we consider the divisions of Ireland) had no sooner circulated through the neighbouring counties, than the old subjects of Dermot conceived it expedient to resume their allegiance, and to crowd round his standard, with all the ardour of the most zealous loyalty. The combined forces marched to Wexford, and the Irish and Ostmen, who then governed the town, marched out to meet the enemy. The Irish army were compelled to return to the town, and the enemy, encouraged by this temporary success, pursued them to the gates of the city. The Irish turned upon their pursuers, and drove back the enemy with considerable loss. At length the clergy of the garrison interposed their mediation between the besieged and besiegers, and Wexford was given up to Dermot and Earl Pembroke, who was immediately invested with the lordship of the city and domain. Harvy of Mountmauris was also head of two considerable districts, on the coast between Wexford and Waterford. Here was settled the first colony of British inhabitants, differing in manners, customs, and language, from the natives, and even to this day preserving that difference in a very remarkable degree, notwithstanding the lapse of many ages. Dermot immediately proceeded, at the head of his combined forces, amounting to 3,000 men, to lay waste the territory of the prince of Ossory, (a part of Leinster) which he desolated with fire and sword; and though the Irish army made a most heroic resistance to the invader, the superiority of English discipline and English arms, counterbalanced the advantages which the Irish enjoyed from their superior knowledge

* FEATHARD, about 81 Irish miles from Dublin, is a very ancient town, of respectable appearance, situated on the southern coast of the barony of Shelburne, county of Wexford. Near this town, at Banna, on the 11th of May, A. D. 1169, the first of the English invaders, Lord Robert Fitzstephen, landed, with his followers.

of the country. Had the latter patiently remained in the woods and morasses, where the English cavalry could not act, they would have wearied the courage, and baffled the discipline of the invaders, and perhaps would have preserved the independence of their country. A reliance on the intrepidity of their soldiers, betrayed them from their native situations into the open plains, where they were exposed to the superior generalship of the English invader.

English historians have laboured, with malicious industry, to paint the comparative superiority of their countrymen over the wild and barbarous natives of Ireland; and hesitate not to brand with the infamous epithets of cruel, and savage, and uncultivated, these unoffending people, whose properties the English were desolating, whose peace they were disturbing, and on the rights and liberties of whose country they were about to trample.

The vengeance of an unprincipled and exiled Irish monarch found refuge in the ambition and avarice of English adventurers; and the miserable and afflicting scenes which the reader of Irish history is doomed to wade through, were acted under the specious and insulting pretext of order, religion and morality—but to proceed. Dermot succeeded in bringing to subjection the revolted subjects of his government, and prepared to defend himself against the denunciations of the Irish monarch, who now began to be alarmed at an invasion which he had hitherto viewed with contempt, and without apprehension.

The Irish reader contemplates, with a mixture of gratification and melancholy, the picture of magnificence and grandeur which the preparations of the monarch of Ireland present to his view, for the invasion of the territories of Dermot, and the expulsion of the English army, who presumed to violate the independence of Ireland. He convened the estates of the nation at Tara, in Meath. He ordained new laws, raised and regulated new seminaries, distributed splendid donations to the various professors of learning, and assembled and reviewed the army in presence of the vassal Irish sovereigns, who waited on their monarch. Dermot, deserted by his subjects on the approach of the Irish monarch, fled to his fastnesses in Wexford, where he strongly entrenched himself.

Before Roderick unsheathed his sword, he remonstrated with the English leaders on the injustice and cruelty of their invasion; on the shameful and odious connection they had formed with an adulterer, and traitor to his country; and that the war they were about to wage with the Irish, was as impolitic as it was unprincipled; for surely, said the monarch of Ireland, Englishmen cannot suppose that Ireland will surrender her rights to a foreign power, without a dreadful and sanguinary struggle.

Fitzstephen, the English general, refused to desert his Irish ally, and determined to abide the event of the contest. Roderick still hesitated, before he would proceed to force; and at the moment he could have crushed this infant effort of the English, to subjugate his country, he was solicited by the clergy to enter into a treaty with Dermot; the principal condition of which was, that he should immediately dismiss the British, with whom again he was never to

court an alliance. Soon after this treaty, we find the English general, Fitzstephen, building a fort at Carrick,* remarkable for the natural strength of its situation. Dermod, supported by his English allies, proceeded to Dublin, and laid waste the territories surrounding that city with fire and sword. The citizens laid down their arms, and supplicated mercy from the cruel and malignant enemy. It is the duty of the historian to record that the inhabitants of this devoted city found refuge in the mercy of the English general, who interposed to allay the fury of Dermod's vengeance. Dermod was not inattentive to every opportunity which afforded him a pretext to violate the treaty, into which force alone obliged him to enter with the Irish monarch. He defended the son-in-law of Donald O'Brien, prince of Thomond, against the efforts of Roderick to reduce him to obedience, and again solicited the aid of his English allies, to assert the rights of his family, against the ambition and pretensions of the Irish monarch. The English generals cheerfully obeyed the invitation; and Roderick, alarmed by the rumours of the formidable strength of the allied armies, declined, for the present, to curb the licentiousness of the prince of Thomond, or to dispute the rights of Dermod to the sovereignty of Leinster.

The son of Dermod was then in the power of Roderick, as an hostage for the allegiance of his father. He threatened Dermod with the destruction of his child, if he did not instantly return to his obedience, dismiss his English allies, and cease to harass and disturb his unoffending neighbours.

Dermod defied the power of Roderick, was careless of the fate of his son, and openly avowed his pretensions to the sovereignty of Ireland. The head of the young Dermod was instantly struck off by order of Roderick. The English continued to spread through the country the wide wasting calamities of a sanguinary war; their thirst of blood seemed to increase with the number of their victims, and their spirit of destruction with the bountiful productions of nature, which covered the country around them. At length the jealousy of the British sovereign awoke, and suspended the fate of

* CARRICK CASTLE, one of the first fortresses erected by the English, is seated on a rock overhanging the river Slaney, about two miles to the northwest of Wexford town. "The remains," says Brewer, "at present, chiefly consist of one square and lofty tower. From this vestige it would appear that the building was of a rugged character; and it would indeed be absurd to look for other lineaments in the structure erected at a season so pregnant with danger. The loop-holes of this ancient tower are unusually small; and the doorway so low and narrow that it cannot be entered without stooping. The bay is here seen to great advantage; and in addition to that lovely expanse of water, the prospect combines a fine variety of craggy rock, ascending woodland, and distant mountain." Adjoining the ruins of this castle, at Carrickmenan, are the beautiful domain and fine mansion of James Edward Devereaux, Esq., whose ancestors have resided here since the beginning of the thirteenth century. Mr. Devereaux was born in the year 1766, and was one of the most active and influential members of the celebrated Catholic committee, who waited, in 1793, on George III., with a petition from the Catholics of Ireland. We believe he is still living. When George IV. was crowned, Mr. Devereaux asserted, successfully, his claim of carrying the golden rod, silver canopy, and sceptre of the dove, supported by four lances, as his ancestors did at the coronation of Richard I.

this unhappy people; and the meanest passion of the human mind prompted Henry to take those measures which justice should have dictated.

Henry issued his edict, forbidding any future supplies of men or of arms to be sent to Ireland, and commanding all his subjects there instantly to return. Strongbow immediately despatched Raymond to his sovereign, to endeavour to allay his jealousy, and to impress his sovereign with the conviction, that whatever they had conquered in Ireland, was conquered for Henry, and that he alone was the rightful possessor of all those territories which had submitted to the arms of Strongbow. Raymond was received with haughtiness and distrust by the English monarch, who refused to comply with his solicitations. At this period Bishop Becket was murdered; a circumstance which to Henry was a source of bitter affliction. The king of Leinster died amidst the triumphs of his allies, despised by the English, who took advantage of his treason, and execrated by the Irish as an infamous and unprincipled exile. The death of this prince was immediately followed by an almost total defection of the Irish from the Earl Strongbow. The earl was compelled to shut himself up: cut off from supplies, and dejected in spirits, he was thus precipitated from the summit of victory, to the lowest gradation of distress. This cheering fact flew through Ireland; and the Irish chieftains crowded from all quarters, went from province to province, animating the people to one bold and general effort against the common enemy of Irish liberty.

Lawrence, archbishop of Dublin, distinguished himself on this occasion, by the zeal and vigour of his patriotism. The sanctity of his character gave weight to his representations. His appeals to the insulted spirit of Irish independence were heard with rapture; and an army, composed of men determined to assert the rights of Ireland, rose up at his call. Dublin was surrounded on all sides, the harbour blocked up, and Strongbow, with an army, which had a few weeks back been desolating the fields of Ireland, was threatened with annihilation by a powerful and indignant monarch. Roderick encamped his troops at CASTLEKNOCK,* westward of Dublin. O'Rourke, of Leitrim, placed himself north of the harbour, near Clontarf. The lord of O'Kinselagh occupied the opposite side, while the prince of Thomond advanced to Kilmainham, within less than a mile from the walls of the metropolis. Even Lawrence, the archbishop, appeared in arms, animating his countrymen to the defence of their liberties against the cruel and desolating invasion of foreign adventurers. The English army might now have paid the forfeit of the injustice and the cruelty which they practised on the Irish, had the latter been animated by one spirit, or directed by one absolute commander. Strongbow took advantage of jealousies and rivalships which existed in the Irish army, and, driven by the desperation of his circumstances, boldly rushed upon the besieging army, and

* CASTLEKNOCK, in the county of Dublin, is about three Irish miles W. from the city. In the reign of Henry II., the Tyrells erected a fortified castle here, which is now in ruins. There are likewise here the remains of an abbey founded by Richard Tyrell, in the twelfth century.

succeeded in dispersing a force which threatened the besieged with annihilation. So confident was the Irish monarch of expelling from his country that proud and insolent force which dared to invade its shores, that he rejected with disdain the overtures of Strongbow, who proposed to acknowledge Roderick as his sovereign, provided the latter would raise the siege. Nothing short of Strongbow's departure from Ireland, with all his forces, would appease the insulted majesty of Ireland. So humiliating a condition served but to rouse from despair the brave and intrepid spirit of Strongbow. He made one effort more, which succeeded in rescuing himself and his faithful followers from the most distressing difficulties. Strongbow immediately proceeded to Wexford and Waterford, and devoted some time, at Ferns, to the exercise of his sovereign authority as undisputed king of Leinster. Here he distributed rewards among his friends, and inflicted punishments on the disaffected. Strongbow was at length summoned to appear before the British monarch, who, having conquered all the difficulties with which he had to combat, both from foreign and domestic enemies, was alarmed at the triumphs of his English subjects in Ireland. The earl obeyed. He appeared before his sovereign, and justified his conduct; he surrendered Dublin, with all the maritime forts and towns, to Henry. Strongbow was suffered by the monarch to retain all his Irish possessions, to be held by the British sovereign and his heirs. O'Rourke, of Breffeny, made a vigorous attack on Dublin, which was bravely defended by Milo de Cogan, one of the boldest and the most intrepid of the English adventurers. O'Rourke lost his son in the attack; a source of bitter affliction to the Irish army. Those extraordinary successes, by an army who were reduced to the greatest extremity, impressed the people of Ireland with dreadful anticipations of that force, which the English monarch had determined to march into their country. The artifices adopted by Henry were not less calculated to conciliate, than the fame of his arms and his talents were to intimidate. He affected to be incensed at the depredations committed by his English subjects on the unoffending people of Ireland, and promised this credulous nation, that he would inflict on their oppressors the most exemplary punishment. Such professions induced numbers to proffer their submission to Henry, and to co-operate with this artful monarch in the conquest of their native land. Not less auxiliary to the designs and speculations of Henry were the malignant jealousies of the Irish chieftains towards each other. Each seemed to think only for his own ambition, for his own aggrandizement; all sacrificed their common country to the miserable passions of envy, of jealousy, or of rivalry. Henry, with his accustomed talent, seized the opportunity which Irish folly afforded him, and determined to invade Ireland with such a force as would ensure an easy conquest of this beautiful and fertile country. He collected a fleet of 240 ships, which conveyed an army consisting of 400 knights and 4,000 soldiers, headed by Strongbow."

Henry, having reduced his rebellious French subjects to obedience, and feeling jealous and alarmed at the success of Strongbow in Ireland, resolved to visit that country himself, as a conqueror,—and

with the view of advancing his dominion over a people who were religiously devoted to the Pope, he despatched his chaplain, the Rev. John Salisbury, to Adrian, the Fourth, an English Pontiff, supposed, by all historians, to be his illegitimate brother, to claim from his Holiness a Bull to grant to him the sovereignty of Ireland. Adrian, flattered at the complimentary letter and presents of so powerful a monarch as Henry II., his reputed paternal brother, speedily gave his chaplain and ambassador the required base and false Bull, of which Dr. Leland gives the following translation :

“ Adrian, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to his dearest son in Christ, the illustrious king of England, greeting, and apostolic benediction.

Full laudably and profitably hath your magnificence conceived the design of propagating your glorious renown on earth, and completing your reward of eternal happiness in heaven ; while, as a Catholic prince, you are intent on enlarging the borders of the church, teaching the truth of the Christian faith to the ignorant and rude, exterminating the roots of vice from the field of the Lord, and for the more convenient execution of this purpose, requiring the counsel and favour of the apostolic SEE. In which, the maturer your deliberation, and the greater the discretion of your procedure, by so much the happier, we trust, will be your progress, with the assistance of the Lord ; as all things are used to come to a prosperous end and issue, which take their beginning from the ardour of faith and the love of religion.

There is indeed no doubt but that Ireland, and all the islands on which Christ, the sun of righteousness, hath shone, and which have received the doctrines of the Christian faith, do belong to the jurisdiction of St. Peter and of the holy Roman church, as your Excellency also doth acknowledge. And therefore we are the more solicitous to propagate the righteous plantation of faith in this land, and the branch acceptable to God, as we have the secret conviction of conscience that this is more especially our bounden duty.

You, then, most dear son in Christ, have signified to us your desire to enter into the island of Ireland, in order to reduce the people to obedience unto laws, and to extirpate the plants of vice ; and that you are willing to pay from each house a yearly pension of one penny to St. Peter, and that you will preserve the rights of the churches of this land whole and inviolate. We therefore, with that grace and acceptance suited to your pious and laudable design, and favourably assenting to your petition, do hold it good and acceptable, that, for extending the borders of the church, restraining the progress of vice, for the correction of manners, the planting of virtue, and the increase of religion, you enter this island, and execute therein whatever shall pertain to the honour of God and welfare of the land ; and that the people of this land receive you honourably, and reverence you as their lord : the rights of their churches still remaining sacred and inviolate ; and saving to St. Peter the annual pension of one penny from every house.

If then you be resolved to carry the design you have conceived into effectual execution, study to form this nation to virtuous man-

ners ; and labour by yourself, and others whom you shall judge meet for this work, in faith, word, and life, that the church may be there adorned, that the religion of the Christian faith may be planted and grow up, and that all things pertaining to the honour of God, and the salvation of souls, be so ordered, that you may be entitled to the fulness of eternal reward from God, and obtain a glorious renown on earth throughout all ages."

"The Bull thus framed," says Leland, "was presented to King Henry, together with a ring, the token of his investiture, as rightful sovereign of Ireland."

Before we shall narrate, in our own language, the arrival of Henry II., at Waterford, we will quote from McDermott an account of the events occurring prior to his invasion, and then we will give to our readers a biographical memoir of that famous patriot and prelate, Archbishop O'Toole.

"When Dermot had invested the city of Dublin, the inhabitants of which were thrown into the utmost consternation, he sent his secretary, Maurice Regan, to summon them to surrender ; and to demand thirty hostages for the performance of the articles he should insist on. The Danish governor, unwilling to abide the issue of a siege, readily complied with the king of Leinster's demand ; but the citizens not agreeing about the hostages, Miles Cogan, one of the English generals, who was posted on the other side of the town, and who was ignorant of the capitulation, had made such a breach in the walls, that his men entered the town, and took possession thereof, before the king of Leinster and the governor were apprised of their success. They found a great quantity of provisions in the city, as well as valuable plunder. Dermot now led his troops against O'Rourke, the king of Breffeny, whose wife he had carried off, and destroyed with fire and sword, the territory of the man whom he had so deeply injured.

The monarch of Ireland, and all the other chiefs, were by this time alarmed at the success of the king of Leinster and his English subsidies ; and indeed it is a matter of wonder, that Roderick should have given him leisure and opportunity to strengthen himself in this manner, and that, at the late peace he had concluded with him, his English subsidies should have been permitted to have remained in the island. Even now, before the monarch would take the field against him, he sent an officer to Dermot, to expostulate with him on his perfidy, assuring him that he would send him his son's head, lay him under a public interdict, and again oblige him to leave the kingdom. Dermot, whose affairs were in such a prosperous condition, that his ambition was in a fair way to be gratified, returned an answer to Roderick by retorting his threat upon him, that instead of dismissing the English, he would send into their country for a reinforcement : that he would not lay down his arms, till he had reduced the whole island under his own authority : and that if the monarch struck off his son's head, or made any of his hostages suffer, he would revenge it by hostilities, which should terminate in the destruction of Roderick and all his race.

Though the monarch of Ireland was both astonished and incensed

at this reply, yet upon mature deliberation, he desisted from his purpose of executing the hostage, apprehensive, no doubt, of his incapability of subduing his enemies. Indeed the fame of the English generals, and the execution done by the archers, as the cross-bow was an instrument of war unknown to the Irish, had struck such a terror over the island, that the monarch found his authority had very much declined. There seems to have been considerable inattention, and want of precaution in the government of Ireland at this time; it is true, a synod was held at Armagh, to inquire into the cause of the arrival of strangers from England to invade their country; and the result of their deliberations ended in this opinion, that the sins of the people had subjected them to the vengeance of heaven, especially the practice of bringing English children and making them slaves.* The author of this revolution, in the midst of his great success, the very time that the throne of Ireland was almost within his reach, and that he thought himself sure of his most sanguine desires, was suddenly arrested by the hand of death, which put an immediate stop to his ambitious career.†

Immediately on the death of the king of Leinster, the earl of Pembroke assumed the government of the province, in right of his wife; or, to speak more truly, by virtue of the formidable army of which he was now commander-in-chief. Taking advantage of the terror which his arms had spread all over the island, he marched to Dublin, to get his right recognized in that capital of his province, and of the kingdom. But Roderick, perceiving that none of the Irish chiefs adhered to the earl of Pembroke, after the death of Dermot, except one of his natural sons, and two petty princes, was encouraged to make another attempt against the English. Some writers attribute his patriotic zeal to Archbishop Lawrence O'Toole, who took infinite pains, they say, to cement a union between the chieftains of Ireland, and to animate them to this attempt in favour of their country. Roderick accordingly levied a great army‡ for the purpose of besieging Dublin. When the earl of Pembroke was apprised of the monarch's armament, he was determined to make every necessary preparation for his defence; he sent for a reinforcement from the garrison towns, and made large promises to such of the Irish as would enlist under his banner.

* Cambrensis, bishop of St. David's, who gives this account, adds "that the English, by a common vice of their country, had a custom to sell their children and kinsfolks into Ireland, although they were neither in want nor extreme poverty."

† DERMOD was certainly a prince of heroic bravery, but that bravery was tarnished by cruelty, for his willing sanction of the massacre, by Raymond le' Gross, of his prisoners, must ever stamp infamy on his memory. Dr. Leland, in his history of Ireland, writes thus of the death of Dermot Macmurrough:—"The Irish annalists, by their account of this event, plainly shew their detestation of the man who, as they express it, first shook the foundation of his country. They represent his death as the miraculous effect of divine wrath, poured upon his guilty head, at the intercession of every Irish saint. His disease, they say, was strange and tremendous, and rendered him an odious and offensive spectacle of misery; that he was deserted in his extremity by every former friend, and expired without any spiritual comforts, in a state of horrid impenitence."

‡ In Regan's account the number is stated to be 60,000, (which Dr. Warner observes must be a mistake for 6,000,) and by some English historians 30,000.

Fitzstephen, governor of Wexford, having detached a party to the earl's assistance, the inhabitants thought this a favourable opportunity of revenging themselves on this usurper; and after a sudden and violent attack, several of his men were killed, and the governor and five of his officers were taken prisoners.

The city of Dublin having been environed with the Irish by land and sea, and the besieged not being provided with ammunition, men or provision, in a sufficient quantity, for any long defence; the earl called a council of war of his principal officers; and, representing to them the great force of the Irish, and their own embarrassed circumstances, proposed to offer terms of capitulation to the monarch, by the archbishop of Dublin, Lawrence, to submit and hold Leinster as a feudatory prince under Roderick, if he would raise the siege and march off with his army. The earl's proposals having been agreed to, the archbishop was forthwith employed to treat with the monarch on these terms. Roderick's answer, however, was, that unless the earl of Pembroke would surrender to him the cities of Dublin, Waterford,* and Wexford, with all his forts and castles, and on a day agreed upon, abandon the island with all the English, he would instantly make the assault, and take the place by storm. It is evident that Roderick was not destitute of spirit and

* WATERFORD. The city of Waterford, which is prosperous, patriotic and pretty, is situated on the south side of the river Suir, at the distance of 8 miles from the sea, and 96 from Dublin. We have before given a historic sketch of the founder of its episcopal see. The junction of the rivers Nore, Suir and Barrow, forms the fine and spacious harbour of Waterford. This ancient and celebrated city, which was first built in the year 879, was the landing place of Henry II., in A. D. 1172,—of Richard II., A. D. 1399,—and from it, James II., after the disastrous battle of the Boyne, sailed for France. There are fine and spacious architectural ornaments in Waterford, particularly the court-house, exchange, custom-house, Catholic and Protestant churches, and the theatre. There are several steam packets now (1836) plying between Waterford and Liverpool. In Waterford are many noble and affecting ruins of abbeys and castles. REGINALD'S TOWER, built, according to the accounts of our annalists, by a Danish chief, whose name it bears, in the tenth century. An Irish antiquarian writes thus of Reginald's tower:—"After the successful storming of the town by the English forces of Earl Strongbow, led on by the redoubtable Raymond le' Gross, in 1171, when the city was plundered, and all the inhabitants found in arms were put to the sword, another Reginald, then prince of the Danes of Waterford, and Malachy O'Phealan, prince of the Deasies, with several other chiefs who had confederated to resist the invaders, and were made prisoners in the combat, were imprisoned in this tower, until their ultimate fate should be determined upon. They were condemned to death,—but saved by the intercession of King Dermot Macmurrough, who, with Fitzstephen, and many other English and Welsh gentlemen, came to Waterford to be present at the marriage of Earl Strongbow with the Princess Eva, the king of Leinster's daughter." There is no quay in Ireland so magnificent and spacious as that of Waterford. It is an English mile in length, margined by a marble promenade, where all the beauty and fashion of the city can be seen in animated movement. To this quay vessels of 800 tons may safely come up, as the harbour, even at low water, is always 40 feet deep. In the year 1793, a noble wooden bridge was thrown across the Suir here, by a MR. SAMUEL COX, of Boston. On one of the centre piers is the following inscription:—"In 1793, a year rendered sacred to national prosperity by the extinction of religious divisions, the foundation of this bridge was laid, at the expense of associated individuals, united by parliamentary grants, by SIR JOHN NEWPORT, Baronet, chairman of their committee. Mr. Samuel Cox, a native of the city of Boston, in America, architect." Waterford is famous for the excellence of its glass manufacture. Boston, June 30, 1836.

resolution ; and mindful of Dermod's violation of the treaty which he had formerly made, he probably deemed his present enemy equally dishonourable. At all events he found that the English were dismayed at the superior number of his troops, and he flattered himself that he should derive considerable advantages from their fears.

When the archbishop reported the monarch's conditions to the English council of war, they who had so lately been conquerors, and elated with their triumphs, became all of a sudden humble and dejected : they were loth to submit to terms so ignominious, and yet they entertained no hopes of success. Miles Cogan, perceiving their despondency, roused them with this spirited address : ' Though we are few in number, we are valiant : our best remedy is to make a sally, which is least suspected by the enemy ; and, I hope, in the goodness of God, that we shall have the victory, or at least die with honour. My request therefore is, that I may be appointed the first to commence the attack.' Encouraged by the intrepidity of this man, the generals were directed to draw up their men with all possible expedition. The command of the van-guard was assigned to Cogan, as he desired, the centre to Raymond le Gross, and the rear to the earl of Pembroke, each body consisting only of two hundred men : for the Irish, of whose fidelity they had no opinion, were left behind in the garrison. They accordingly directed their march, and, as Regan states, they broke furiously into the enemy's camp, and made such a slaughter that all fled before them, one hundred and fifty* of the Irish having been killed, and only one man on the side of the English. It appears that Roderick's numerous forces were exceedingly careless, and as,

'It is the curse of fools to be secure,'

they were obliged to abandon their camp with all their baggage and provision.

The city of Dublin being still in the possession of the English, the earl of Pembroke left it under the care of Cogan, and marched towards Wexford, to release his friend, Fitzstephen, and the officers who had been taken prisoners with him. But the inhabitants, having been apprised of his approach, set the town on fire, after they had taken away the prisoners and their best effects ; and removed to an island in its neighbourhood, where they knew themselves to be secure. Thus the earl's intention was entirely frustrated ; and, during his march, he was attacked by O'Ryan, the chief of a territory through which he passed ; and should probably have been defeated, had not O'Ryan been killed by a monk in the earl's army ; at whose fall the Irish were so disconcerted that they retreated from the field. Here the earl's only son, as we are informed by some ancient English writers, a youth of seventeen years of age, was so terrified at the numerous army of the Irish, that he

* This inconsiderable loss out of 60,000 men, as stated by Regan, evidently proves his calculation to be erroneous : and supposing the number to be 30,000, as stated by Hume, &c. &c., it is an incredible victory for only *six hundred* men to obtain, notwithstanding the advantage they had in discipline and arms.

fled towards Dublin; but on hearing of his father's victory, he returned to congratulate him; when the earl caused him to be immediately executed for his cowardice, by being cut in two with a sword. Such a savage act cannot be recorded of the Irish even in their most barbarous days; and far exceeds the unnatural practice before mentioned of selling their English children to the Irish!

When the extraordinary success of the English generals was reported to Henry, the king of England became exceedingly alarmed and jealous. He imagined that they would be able only to recover the king of Leinster's regalities; and, if they attempted any thing further upon that success, that they would be obliged to apply to him for assistance, which would furnish him with a pretence of going over to Ireland himself, and effecting a conquest, which he had long meditated. When told that Dermot was dead—that the earl of Pembroke had seized upon the province of Leinster, and that he and his generals daily added to their number of victories, he began to suspect that they would make themselves masters of a country which he intended for himself, and he instantly prepared to attack Ireland in person. First of all he published a proclamation, that no ship or vessel should go to any part of Ireland with ammunition or provision, or to carry on any commerce of any kind; and at the same time requiring all his subjects in that kingdom, of whatever rank or degree, to return home immediately, upon the penalty of forfeiting all their estates and effects in England, and of being declared rebels and traitors. This proclamation, which was issued under the pretence, that the adventurers had engaged in the undertaking without his royal permission, had the desired effect; for though the generals were unwilling to relinquish advantages, which were far greater than any they had to expect in England; yet they were afraid of exasperating a king, who, they well knew had the ability, and would not want the inclination of crushing them effectually. They immediately sent Raymond le' Gross over to make their submission to his majesty, and to assure him that they were so far from having any intention of withdrawing their allegiance from him, that all the conquests they had made were effected in his majesty's name, and should all be subject to his authority. But this submission did not content King Henry; and Raymond was sent back with letters to the earl of Pembroke, requiring him to repair to England without delay, and give an account of his conduct in person to his majesty. Though the progress of his arms in Ireland must have been retarded by his absence, the earl durst not disobey his majesty's summons. When he came into the king's presence, he pleaded his permission to espouse the cause of Dermot; and after giving him a full account of affairs in Ireland, he offered to deliver up to Henry the possession of Dublin, Waterford, Wexford, and all the seaports, and other places they had conquered; and to hold all their acquisitions in vassalage to his crown. Henry approved of these conditions, and sent the earl back into Ireland, with an assurance of following him immediately, to complete the conquest of the island."

LAWRENCE O'TOOLE, then, A. D. 1172, archbishop of Dublin,

was, of course, possessed of great influence in Ireland, as might justly be expected from his high episcopal dignity and character. A biographical memoir, therefore, of that illustrious prelate, who acted so prominent a part in the transactions of this period, will, we think, add to the interest of this history. St. Lawrence O'Toole was the son of Prince Maurice O'Toole, of Wicklow, and was born at Imaly, near Rathdrum, in that county, about the year 1124. At the age of ten, after receiving the rudiments of his education from the prior of Glendalough, his father was constrained to surrender him as an hostage to the tyrannic Dermot, king of Leinster. The despotic and depraved king treated the boy with relentless cruelty. As soon as his father heard of Lawrence's treatment he waited on the bishop of Glendalough, and complained, in severe terms of reproach, of the king's barbarity to his son. The pious bishop waited on King Dermot, and by his feeling remonstrance persuaded the oppressor to entrust Lawrence to his care. Under the instruction of the pious and learned prelate of Glendalough, (the vale of the two lakes) he became perfectly conversant with classic literature and scholastic theology. Having thus completed his education, he returned to his paternal home, accompanied by his episcopal preceptor. The father, during the visit, mentioned to the friendly bishop that, as Butler relates, he "intended to cast lots to ascertain which of his four sons he should destine to the service of the church. Lawrence, who was present, was justly startled at such a mad and superstitious project, but glad to find so favourable an overture to his desires, cried out with great earnestness, '*there is no need of casting lots,—for it is my most hearty desire to have for my inheritance no other portion than God in the service of the church.*' Hereupon, the father, taking him by the hand, offered him to God, by delivering him to the good bishop, in whose hands he left him, having first recommended him to St. Comegen, or Kevin, the founder of the great monastery there, and patron of the diocese which has been since united to the see of Dublin."

The REV. ALBAN BUTLER, in his *Lives of the Saints*, speaks thus of Archbishop O'Toole :—"Gregory, the archbishop of Dublin,* happening to die about the time that this saint was thirty years of age, he was unanimously chosen to fill that metropolitical see, and

* Donat was probably the first bishop of this see after the conversion of the infidels: he died in 1074. His successor, Gilla Patrick, was drowned at sea in 1084, and was succeeded by Dongus O'Haingly, who died in 1095, of a pestilence called "Teasach." His successor, Samuel O'Haingly, died in 1121; and St. Celsus, bishop of Armagh, was appointed guardian of the spiritualities of the see of Dublin, before the election of Gregory, who died the 8th of October, 1161, and was succeeded by St. Lawrence O'Toole. It was in the year 1152, nine years before Gregory's death, that Cardinal John Paparo, legate of Pope Eugenius III., conferred on this see the archiepiscopal dignity, having brought from Rome four palls for four metropolitans in Ireland, and assigned respective suffragans to each. The four metropolitan sees are, Armagh in the province of Ulster, Dublin in Leinster, Cashel in Munster, and Tuam in Connaught. Between the two first a controversy had continued for a considerable time concerning precedence; but, according to Harris, it was at length finally determined both by papal and regal authority, that the archbishop of Armagh should be entitled "Primate of all Ireland," and the archbishop of Dublin "Primate of Ireland;" like Canterbury and York in England.

was consecrated in 1162, by Gelasius, archbishop of Armagh, and successor of St. Malachy. In this exalted station he watched over his see and his flock with fear, and with unwearied application to every part of his office, having always before his eyes the account which he was to give to the sovereign pastor of souls. His first care was to reform the manners of his clergy, and to furnish his church with worthy ministers. His exhortations to others were most powerful, because enforced with sweetness and vigour, animated with an apostolic spirit, and strongly impressed by the admirable example of his own life, which every one who had any sparks of piety in his breast, was ashamed to see himself fall so infinitely short of. About the year 1163, he engaged the secular canons of his cathedral of the Holy Trinity,* to receive the rule of the regular canons of Arouasia, an abbey which was founded in the diocese of Arras, about fourscore years before, with such reputation for sanctity and discipline, that it became the head or mother house of a numerous congregation. This saint took himself the religious habit, which he always wore under his pontifical attire. He usually eat with the religious in the refectory, observed their hours of silence, and always assisted with them at the midnight office; after which he continued a long time in the church in private prayer before a crucifix, and towards break of day went to the burial-place to pour forth certain prayers for the souls of the faithful departed. He never eat flesh, and fasted all Fridays on bread and water, and oftentimes without taking any sustenance at all. He wore a rough hair shirt, and used frequent disciplines. Every day he entertained at table thirty poor persons, and often many more, besides great numbers which he maintained in private houses. All found him a father both in their temporal and spiritual necessities; and he was most indefatigable in the sacred functions of his charge, especially in announcing assiduously to his flock the word of life. To watch over, and examine more narrowly into his own heart and conduct, and to repair his interior spirit, he used often to retire for some days into some close solitude. When he was made bishop, King Dermot Mac Murchad preferred to the abbey of Glendalough one so notoriously unworthy of that dignity that he was in a short time expelled, and Thomas, a nephew of the saint, by whom he had been brought up, was canonically elected. By the care of this young, pious and learned abbot, discipline and piety again flourished in that house. And from that time St. Lawrence frequently made choice of Glendalough, for his retreats: but he usually hid himself in a solitary cave, at some distance from the monastery, between a rock and a deep lake, in which St. Coemgen had lived. When this

* This church was built for secular canons, in the centre of the city, by Sitricus, king of the Ostmen in Dublin, and Bishop Donat, in 1038. The change made by St. Lawrence continued until Henry VIII., in 1541, converted it into a Dean and Chapter; from which time it hath taken the name of Christ Church, being before called the Church of the Holy Trinity. The principal cathedral of Dublin is dedicated under the invocation of St. Patrick, and was built in the south suburbs of the city, by Archbishop Comyn, in 1190, on the same spot where an old parochial church had long stood, which was said to have been erected by St. Patrick.

saint came out of these retreats he seemed like another Moses coming from conversing with God, full of a heavenly fire and divine light.

St. Lawrence found the greatest part of his flock so blinded with the love of the world, and enslaved to their passions, that the zealous pains he took seemed lost upon them. He threatened them with the divine judgment in case they did not speedily and effectually reform their manners by sincere repentance : but like Noah when he preached to a world drowned in sin, he seemed to them to speak in jest, until they were overtaken on a sudden by those calamities which he had foretold, which served to purify the elect, and doubtless brought many who, before, had been deaf to the saint's remonstrances, to a sense of their spiritual miseries."

Before the arrival of King Henry II., the archbishop of Dublin, with humane, charitable and patriotic zeal, endeavoured to dissuade Roderick, the monarch, from attacking the English invaders, and promised to prevail on them to return to their own country. The English chieftains, perceiving what a mighty influence the archbishop of Dublin had with his countrymen, paid, through policy, the most servile obedience to that prelate. Strongbow, Fitzstephen, Miles Cogan, Fitzgerald, Barry and Pepper, (or Peppard, our remote ancestor) bent the knee of hypocritical sycophancy before the archbishop of Dublin, and contributed large sums of money to enlarge Christ's Church, in Dublin. But on the arrival of Henry II. at Waterford, and on his promulgating, as the authority of his invasion, the Bull of Adrian IV., the bishop of Dublin became justly indignant at the falsehoods put forth in that document against his beloved country.

"What!" said he, with anger, to Fitzstephen, "is it possible that his Holiness should charge us, Irish Catholics, with a want of religion,—they, who have, from the mission of St. Patrick, down to the present day, been the devoted and enthusiastic servants of the see of Rome. My Lord Fitzstephen, the love of country, an abhorrence of a calumny which is vilely libellous on our character, emboldens me to say, that I am ready to be suspended at the will of his Holiness; but, my lord, all the popes that ever lived, could not make me a traitor to my loved country. And I will shew that neither King Henry nor Pope Adrian, will be able to shake my resolution,—religion, it is true, is dear to me—heaven knows how dear!—but the liberty of my own native country is still dearer! My lord, you are at full liberty to communicate my sentiments to the Sovereign Pontiff, because, as an ecclesiastic, he can dispose of me as he may like; but as an Irishman, whose heart treasures the image of Ireland, an archangel could not estrange my affection from my own beloved Erin." Fitzstephen, of course, communicated the daring sayings of the archbishop to his master, Henry,—and there can be no doubt but that jealous and envious monarch conveyed them to the Pope. The love of country made this good and excellent bishop brave and bold. Dr. Leland, a bigoted Protestant historian of Ireland, eulogizes Archbishop O'Toole as follows:—"Lawrence, archbishop of Dublin, whose erudition and sanctity of

character gave weight to his representations, flew from province to province, to every inferior district, and to every chieftain, entreating, exhorting, and commanding them to seize the present opportunity—to take arms against a common enemy, and to exterminate the dangerous foreigners, now worn out by their distresses, and ready to sink for ever under the first vigorous assault. Not contented with raising a spirit of indignation and valour in his countrymen,—the political, patriotic and indefatigable prelate, in conjunction with Roderick, the monarch, despatched emissaries to Gothred, king of the Isle of Man, as well as to other princes of the northern isles, who made the most affecting representations of the cruelty and ambition of the Britons, whom no bounds could restrain,—entreating their assistance against an enemy who would not confine their injurious attempts to Ireland, but extend their usurpations—and at last fall, with their whole weight, on those who now seemed most remote from danger.”

When Henry landed in Waterford, and learned that the archbishops of Armagh and Cashel, Gelasius and Lawrence, were, as patriots, hostile to him, and justly incensed at the falsehoods set forth in Pope Adrian's bull, he began to become alarmed for the success of his expedition to Ireland. Our historians all agree that Gelasius, a prelate held in great respect by the Irish, the then primate of Armagh, refused to attend the synod of the Irish clergy called by Henry, at Cashel, county of Tipperary, over which Christian, the then bishop of Lismore, the pope's legate, presided. “The prelate's of Ulster followed,” writes Dr. Leland, “the example of their revered metropolitan. And if the prelate of Tuam, or Lawrence of Dublin, who had so zealously contended against the English, obeyed the summons, they might have deemed their presence necessary to preserve the honour of their church, to them a point of moment, from injurious representation,—and by a readiness to correct what might really be found amiss to deprive the invader of the great pretence for extending his hostilities.” In the year 1179, Archbishop Lawrence, in obedience to the summons of Pope Alexander III., repaired to Rome, where he so ably and eloquently vindicated the religious character of the Irish people, before the pontiff and court of cardinals, that his Holiness conferred on him the exalted dignity of legate for Ireland. Henry II., who looked upon the archbishop with an eye of malignant jealousy, felt grieved and mortified when he heard of the distinguished honour with which the pope dignified him.

At the earnest and especial request of the pope, the archbishop of Dublin attended at the famous council of Lateran, held in the year 1179, and had the honour of preaching an eloquent Latin sermon there, which, by the brilliancy of its style, excited the admiration of the pontiff and assembled prelates. “As soon as St. Lawrence returned home to his see,” writes the Rev. Mr. Butler, in the *Lives of the Saints*, “he began vigorously to execute his legantine power by reforming the manners of the clergy, and making wholesome regulations. He found the whole country then (A. D. 1179) afflicted with a terrible famine, which continued to prevail and rage for three years. In consequence, this pious and benevo-

lent saint laid himself under an obligation of feeding every day fifty strangers, and three hundred of poor persons of his own diocese, besides many others whom he furnished with clothes, victuals, and the other necessities of life." The prelate, desirous of reconciling Roderick and Henry to each other, set out for Normandy, where an insurrection had suddenly called the British monarch. Haughty and despotic as King Henry no doubt was, he yet was induced to listen with attention to the mediation and advice of a prelate so eminent for knowledge, popularity and sanctity, as Archbishop O'Toole, and to enter into a compact highly favourable and advantageous for Roderick. On the departure of the bishop, King Henry, as a token of his regard, presented him with a diamond ring of great value.

Thus dismissed by Henry, the archbishop set out on his journey, but had not proceeded farther than the abbey of Eue, near the confines of Normandy, when he was seized with a malignant fever which terminated his earthly career on the 14th of November, A. D. 1180, in the seventy-third year of his age. This illustrious prelate was canonized by Pope Honorius, in A. D. 1227, and his relics were enshrined by the archbishop of Rouen. Sir James Ware says, "that part of his relics were translated to Christ's Church, in Dublin."

"Henry proclaimed," says Leland, "that the professed design of his expedition was not to conquer, but to take possession of a country granted to him by the pope, and to exercise a sovereignty which he affected to believe must be acknowledged and obeyed without the least difficulty or reluctance.*

Amidst the acclamations of joy at the arrival of this new sovereign, Earl Strongbow made a formal surrender of Waterford, and did homage to Henry for the principality of Leinster. The men of Wexford were at hand with their prisoner Fitzstephen, whom they presented to the king, repeating their accusations, and imploring justice against their tyrant and oppressor. Henry received them with an affected commiseration of their wrongs, too gross to impose on any but the rude and inexperienced; assured them of his protection, and sternly reproaching Fitzstephen for his presumption, remanded him to prison. The Irish were rejoiced to find that they had not only escaped the punishment due to their boldness and cruelty, but that they had involved their enemy in danger and dis-

* This was the idea which the Irish subjects of later times entertained. There was a tradition in the reign of Edward, the Second, which though not unexceptionably established, yet shews what were their conceptions at that period. It was said that while Henry's fleet was yet at sea, an Ostman lord of Waterford, who supposed that the descent must be made upon his lands, and was solicitous to secure his property from depredation, drew some chains across the harbour, in order to divert the fleet to some other quarter; that as the obstacle was soon overcome, Henry, immediately on his landing, seized this lord and his accomplices, whose crime was that they had presumed to treat him as an invader, not as the rightful sovereign of Ireland; that he therefore dealt with them not as enemies who had acted in a fair course of open war, but as rebellious subjects; that they were tried in what he called the king's court, the act of rebellion proved, and sentence of high treason executed upon them. *Placit. Coronæ* 4 Edv. II. *Turr. Bermingh.*

grace ; and Fitzstephen was the less mortified, as he well knew the purchase of his liberty, and that he must of necessity resign all his Irish acquisitions to the king.

The fame of his intended expedition had for sometime been spread through Ireland, and its influence upon the several toparchs was soon discovered. Dermot Mac-Arthy, prince of Desmond, was the first chieftain who submitted and acknowledged the sovereignty of Henry. On the very day after his arrival, this Irish prince attended at his court, resigned his city of Cork to the king, did him homage, and stipulated to pay a tribute for the rest of his territory, which on these conditions he was to enjoy without further molestation or restraint. An English governor and garrison were immediately appointed to take possession of his capital, while the king displayed his power and magnificence by marching to Lismore, where he chose a situation, and gave the necessary orders and directions for building a fort. From thence proceeding to Cashel, we are told he had an interview with the archbishop of this see ; and possibly might have deemed it useful to possess this prelate, the first of the Irish clergy who appeared before him, with an opinion of his gracious intentions to his country, and his zeal for the regulations of its church. Nor were these short excursions without their influence, in striking the inhabitants with an awful and terrible impression of his power. A formidable army hovering about the districts of each petty chieftain, when each was left to his own resources for defence, quickened their resolves, and conquered every remains of pride, or reluctance in submitting to the invader. O'Brien of Thomond, thought it dangerous to delay, and meeting Henry on the banks of the Suir, surrendered his city of Limerick, and did homage for his other territory, engaging to pay him tribute. Donchad of Ossory, dreading the advantages which his rival might acquire by this forward zeal, hastened to the king, and submitted to become his tributary and vassal. O'Phelan of the Decies followed these examples, and all the inferior chiefs of Munster vied with each other in the alacrity of their submissions. All were received with gracious assurances of favour and protection, entertained with magnificence, loaded with presents, and dismissed with deep impressions of the grandeur and condescensions of this powerful monarch.

He returned to Wexford ; and here, as it was no longer necessary to keep up the appearance of resentment to Fitzstephen, his barons were permitted to intercede for a brave subject, who had not willingly or intentionally offended, for whose future fidelity they were all ready to become sureties, and who was himself prepared to give the best surety for his allegiance, by a formal resignation of all his Irish possessions to his sovereign. Fitzstephen was set at liberty, and surrendered Wexford and its territory to the king, doing homage for the rest of his acquisitions, which he was allowed to retain from Henry and his heirs.

And now, having provided for the security of Munster, and stationed his garrisons in the cities of Limerick, Cork, Waterford and Wexford, Henry determined to proceed to Dublin, to take possession of this city in due form, which had been surrendered by

Earl Richard. He led his troops through Ossory in a slow and stately progress, so as to strike the rude inhabitants with the splendour and magnificence of his royal army, and to give their chieftains an opportunity of repairing to his camp, and acknowledging his sovereignty. Their indifference to the interests of Roderick, as well as their terror of the English arms, soon determined them to make their peace with Henry. The Irish lords of Leinster deemed his service more honourable than a subjection to Strongbow, whose severity had rendered him an object of horror to the Irish, even from his first landing. As he advanced towards Dublin, the neighbouring lords all appeared and submitted; O'Carroll of Orgial, a chieftain of still greater power and consequence, repaired to his camp, and in due form engaged to become his tributary; and to complete the mortification of Roderick, his old and intimate associate, O'Rourke of Breffeny, whose interests he had supported, whose personal injuries he had revenged, whom he had made lord of a considerable part of Meath, so that Giraldus calls him king of Meath, abandoned his falling friend and ally, and became the willing vassal of this new sovereign."

Roderick, though deserted by the greater number of the provincial princes, and deranged by the dissensions and disaffections of some of the members of his own family, still assumed the proud attitude and spirit becoming the monarch of Ireland, and indignantly refused to listen to any overtures of dependence which Henry had made to him, while his devoted soldiers of Connaught remained faithful, and enabled him to contend bravely in the battle field for crown and life. Collecting all the forces he could, he took up his position in an entrenched camp on the banks of the Shannon, where he determined to await the approach of the invading foes. His unflinching and spirited independence exasperated King Henry, who, on the return of the messengers whom he sent to Roderick, ordered Hugh de Lacy and Fitzadelm, two valiant English knights, to march with a formidable army, to reduce the obstinate and contumacious monarch of Ireland to subjection and vassalage. After Henry had sojourned three months in Dublin, where he sumptuously feasted, and cunningly cajoled the credulous Irish princes who had submitted to his regal sway,* he received notice of the threatened insurrection of Henry, his eldest son, and of his second, afterwards Richard I,—the execrations that were every where fulminated against him as the instigator of the murder of Archbishop Becket, and the information that two cardinals had arrived in England to excommunicate him for

* "Henry left no arts unpractised to seduce the Irish chieftains from their allegiance due to the monarch, Roderick. He dazzled the eyes of the people by the splendour of his hospitality,—he deceived them by the most conciliating expressions of kindness—he intoxicated the base and degraded Irishmen by the magnitude of his professions,—and consoled the afflicted and depressed spirits of a subjugated people, by a perpetual round of costly pleasures, of empty, though magnificent pageantry. Such, for more than six hundred years, has been the insidious practice of England towards this devoted country,—the hospitality of the viceroy's table put into the scale against the miserable consequence of a narrow policy, which full of jealousy and terror, cramps the industry, corrupts the morals, and encourages the most vicious and unprincipled propensities of our nature."—LAWLESS.

being an accomplice in that cruel and atrocious deed, which greatly alarmed him, and warned him of the necessity of returning immediately to England, with all possible expedition.

He took his departure from Dublin in the spring of 1173, embarked at Wexford, on the feast of Easter, in that year. Prior to his sailing, he appointed Earl Strongbow, in conjunction with Raymond le' Gross, chief governors of such of the Irish districts as then recognized his authority; for over the west of Ireland, under Roderick, he had no control,—and the gallant and patriotic chieftains of Ulster presented a brave and bold front to the Saxon invaders.

To all his principal officers, before embarking, he made large grants of land—he invested De Lacy with the lordship of Meath, and the governorship of the city of Dublin—to Maurice Fitzgerald, the ancestor of the duke of Leinster, he assigned domains—and bestowed on John de Courcy a deed of the whole of the principality of Ulster, in the event of his being able to possess himself of it by the power of his arms, and the right of conquest. He caused all the territories under English domination, in Ireland, to be divided into counties and baronial districts, and sheriffs to be appointed for the shires, cities and towns. He recommended that several strong castles and embanked forts, should be erected, not only within the walls of Dublin, but in every approach to it from the country. “Sir John Davies observed,” says Mr. Lawless, “that Henry II. left not one true or faithful subject behind him in Ireland, more than he found when he first landed. A small interval of time elapsed, until the old animosities and jealousies of the Irish chieftains broke out with their accustomed fury, and, impatient of the yoke to which they had submitted, manifested a disposition to rebel against the authority to which they had so lately and so reluctantly subjected themselves.” The departure of the king convinced the English chieftains that to hold their conquests and possessions, they had solely and absolutely to depend on their own resources, resolution, and valour, and that they had a fierce, brave and determined enemy in those justly offended Irish toparchs who were ejected by force of arms, from their lands and patrimony; so that they made every preparation, and employed every defensive expedient which they judged calculated to protect them from a hostile attack, or a sudden surprise.

Before Henry set out for Windsor, in order to propitiate the just wrath of Pope Alexander, for the murder of Bishop Becket, he made, it is said, a pilgrimage, barefooted, to the cathedral of St. David's, where, we fear, he only affected an expression of penitence and humble devotion, to impose on the holy father, and for the purpose of reinstating himself in the good graces of the court of Rome. In England every tongue was loud, bitter and violent in denouncing him as the cruel employer of the assassins of Archbishop Becket,* so that with his (late rebel) son Henry, he set off

* As the history of Henry II. unfortunately is closely identified with that of Ireland, we extract, in this note, Dr. Lingard's luminous and interesting account of the assassination of the archbishop of Canterbury. The good prelate boldly censured Henry for his adulterous intercourse with “the fair Rosamond,” and his cruel imprisonment of his Queen Eleanor. For doing this warranted, eccle-

for France to avoid the overwhelming storm of public indignation and hostile opinion, which impended over his head. On his arrival in Normandy, he met the cardinals, whose, perhaps, arbitrary demands of penance and submission to the court of Rome, he at first sternly and haughtily rejected, "observing to them," says Dr. O'Halloran, "when they threatened him with excommunication,—*"By the eyes of God! (his common oath) I neither regard you nor your excommunications, any more than I do an egg!"* But in a short time, a regard for his own interest, and a consideration of the slippery and untenable grounds on which his now tottering power, both in England and France, rested, made him change the clamorous notes of his lofty arrogance to the prayers of humility and penitence. He meekly signified to the cardinals his entire readiness and ardent desire of submitting to any penance, no matter how mortifying, which the pope might think proper to impose upon him,—declared that he had resolved, if the sovereign pontiff would annul the decree of excommunication, and confirm to him the grant of Ireland, made by Adrian IV., to make a pilgrimage to the tomb of the martyred archbishop, at Canterbury, and to conduct himself as a religious and devoted son of the church. By these specious and beguiling assurances, he ingratiated himself in the good opinion of the cardinals, on whose favourable representations Pope Alex-

siastical, and highly moral duty, as a Christian prelate, Henry marked him out for the object of his vengeance. "On the following Tuesday after Christmas day, December 28, 1171, arrived secretly in the neighbourhood," writes Dr. Lingard, "four knights, Reginald Fitzure, William Tracy, Hugh de Morreville, and Richard Brito. They had been present in Normandy when the king, irritated by the representations of the three bishops, had exclaimed,—*'of the cowards who eat my bread, is there not one who will free me from this turbulent priest?'* And mistaking this passionate expression for the royal license, they bound themselves by oath to return to England, and either carry off or murder the primate. Pretending to have received their commission from Henry, they ordered the primate, whose apartment they had abruptly entered, to absolve the excommunicated prelates. He replied in the negative with firmness, and occasionally with warmth. * * * When they were gone his attendants loudly expressed their alarm: he alone remained cool and collected, and neither in his tone nor gesture betrayed the slightest symptom of apprehension. In this moment of suspense the voices of the monks singing vespers in the choir, struck his ears,—and it occurred to some one that the church was a place of greater security than the palace. The archbishop was borne along by the pious importunities of his friends. * * * When he heard the gates close behind him, he instantly ordered them to be re-opened, saying, *'that the temple of God was not to be fortified like a castle.'* On passing through the north transept, he was overtaken by the knights, with twelve companions, all in complete armour, who had burst into the church. As it was almost dark, he might, if he had pleased, have concealed himself among the crypts; but he turned to meet them, followed by Edward Grim, his cross-bearer, the only one of his attendants who had not fled. To the vociferation of one of the assassins, *'where is the traitor?'* he calmly replied, *'here I am, the archbishop, but no traitor.'* When he was rudely told that he must absolve the bishops, he resolutely answered—*'Till they offer satisfaction, I will not.'* *'Then die!'* exclaimed the assassin, aiming a blow at his head. Grim interposed his arm, which was broken; but the force of the stroke bore away the primate's cap, and wounded him on the crown. As he felt the blood trickling down his face, he joined his hands, and bowed his head, saying,—*'In the name of Christ, and for the defence of his church, I am ready to die!'* In this posture, turned towards his murderers, without a groan, and without a motion, he awaited a second blow, which threw him on his knees,—the third laid him on the floor at the foot of St. Bennet's altar."

ander III. not only confirmed, by a new bull, that of his predecessor, Adrian, in its fullest extent, but invested him with a more exalted power of dominion over Ireland.

“Henry also,” observes Dr. Lingard, “obtained from the pontiff a bull empowering him to enfeoff any one of his sons with the lordship of Ireland. In a great council assembled at Oxford, A. D. 1177, he conferred that dignity on Prince John, a boy only in his twelfth year,—and cancelling the grants he had formerly made, retained for himself, in demesne, all the seaports with the adjoining cantreds, and distributed the rest of the English possessions among the chief adventurers, to be holden by the tenure of military service of him and his son John.” Before Hugh de Lacy and Henry Fitzadelm reached Meath, with their main forces, King Roderick crossed the Shannon, attacked the English advanced guards, destroyed their entrenchments, and compelled them to fly back in dismay to their head quarters in the county of Dublin. But De Lacy, urgently representing to the two viceroys, Strongbow and Raymond le’ Gross, (the latter having then, A. D. 1175, married his colleague’s sister, Basilica) the danger of not speedily arresting the progress of Roderick, induced these chiefs, with a large army, to march with celerity to Meath; but Roderick, timely apprized of their approach, repassed the Shannon, beyond which the English did not venture to pursue him. At this period, A. D. 1175, the success of O’Connor in the west, and of O’Brien in the south, filled the English with fears and evil forebodings, which were greatly increased now, on the departure of Strongbow from Ireland to assist Henry in his wars in France against his rebellious son, and the French and Scottish kings, who made common cause with the unnatural and unfilial prince. The fortunate reconciliation, however, with the court of Rome, proved, in Normandy, as effectual as a victory for King Henry.

It does not, however, fall within the province of an Irish historian to record Henry’s splendid successes in England and France, which the anxious reader will find eloquently narrated in Dr. Lingard’s admirable history of England. The departure of Strongbow, the chief prop of English power, from Ireland, filled the discontented Irish chieftains with joy, for they regarded it as a propitious occasion, afforded to them by good fortune, to assert and recover their lost rights and properties. Big with the hope of success, they held private meetings to concert plans for the expulsion of the strangers from their country, and fearlessly and spiritedly proclaimed their determination of compelling the invaders to return to England. At this juncture, too, the designs of the Irish chiefs bid fair to be carried into effectual success by the dissensions and jealousies that prevailed between the English chieftains, and the mutinous spirit of discontent that disordered and disaffected their soldiers. These soldiers had unlimited confidence in the courage and capacity of their late gallant and popular leader, Strongbow, while they looked with distrust and apprehension on their present commanders.

Mr. Lawless, in narrating the discords which then threatened to subvert English dominion in Ireland, observes :—“Such differences

would have been fatal to the English interests in Ireland, were they not put an end to by the second appointment of Strongbow to the vice-regency of Ireland. The latter, however useful an auxiliary to Henry in his foreign wars, was again sent to Ireland, to pursue the conquests of the British monarch in that country."

CHAPTER LXVIII.

Death of the Prince of Breffeny.—Treaty between Henry and Roderick, the monarch. Death of Strongbow.—Raymond le' Gross is appointed chief governor of Ireland. Displaced by order of King Henry.—Fitzadelm promoted in his place.—His administration.—Hugh de Lacy appointed Lord Deputy.—De Courcy's cruel conduct in Ulster.

O'ROURKE, at this period, A. D. 1175, rendered himself, by his heroic valour and military power, very formidable to the English chieftains, having in all his encounters with them, displayed a boldness of attack, and a skill of generalship, that excited, at once, their astonishment and admiration.

These despotic adventurers "parcelled out lands to their most attached English friends, and drove the unoffending natives from the inheritance of their forefathers. Such measures roused the indignation of Roderick, the prince of Breffeny or Leitrim. He repaired to Dublin, and insisted upon a conference at Tara. This conference was held; but, as English historians relate, O'Rourke endeavoured, insidiously, to ensnare the unwary English general, who had nigh fallen a victim to his confidence in his honour. Here it may be permitted to observe, that the situation of O'Rourke, the Irish chieftain, rendered him more independent of the dishonourable artifices with which he is charged, than that of the English viceroy, De Lacy. That the cautions which historians put into the mouths of De Lacy's friends not to trust to the honour of O'Rourke, were only more artful modes of concealing the stratagem, which was planned and executed by the English, and that an Irish chieftain, from his rank, situation and condition, would be less likely to put into practice the low or the mean artifices of cowardly policy, than those administrations, whose diminished forces were now confined to a very small portion of Irish territory, and who would leave no experiment untried by which their objects could be obtained, or their enemy vanquished. O'Rourke fell a victim at this conference, and De Lacy was thus liberated from one of his most formidable opponents. The Irish loudly proclaimed the treachery by which their favourite prince was sacrificed, and vowed the most dreadful vengeance on his destroyers."

The army of Munster, on the departure of Raymond le' Gross for Wales, was entrusted by Strongbow to Hervey Mountmorres.

"Hervey," says Dr. Leland, "was but too sensible how much his own character had been obscured by the superior lustre of his rival,

and now determined to engage in some brave enterprize, which might regain him the affections of the soldiery, and emulate the successes of Le' Gross. He represented to Earl Strongbow the necessity of speedily repressing that spirit of revolt and insurrection which had appeared among the Irish princes ; and as the dispositions lately made in Meath, seemed to have established an effectual barrier against the king of Connaught, he advised him to bend his whole force against the insurgents of Munster, and by chastising their revolt, and reducing them to due obedience, to strike terror into those who were equally disaffected, but had not yet dared to commence hostilities. The earl, whose genius was better fitted to adopt and execute, than to form a plan of operations, readily yielded to these instances, and in conjunction with Mountmorres, led a considerable body of forces to the city of Cashel. When their troops had been here reviewed, and information received of the posture and numbers of the enemy, Hervey prevailed upon him, in order to give their armament a more brilliant and formidable appearance, to despatch his orders to Dublin, that a considerable party of the garrison, consisting of Ostmen, who had engaged in the service of the English, should, without delay, join their main body. As this detachment advanced, the fame of its motions spread through the country, and was conveyed into the quarters of the enemies. O'Brien of Thomond, a valiant and sagacious chieftain, and implacably averse to the English interests, conceived the design of cutting off this body, as the most effectual means of weakening and dispiriting the enemy. He suffered the Ostmen to advance as far as Thurles,* and there to encamp in a state of careless security, when falling suddenly upon them, he wreaked his fury upon men utterly unprepared for defence. Four hundred of the detachment, together with their four principal commanders, were slaughtered upon the field ; and, to complete the triumph of O'Brien, Earl Richard, on receiving the intelligence of this misfortune, retired with all the precipitation of a routed general, and threw himself for safety into Waterford.

This disgrace of the English arms, which was magnified by fame into a decisive victory obtained over Strongbow and his united powers, served as a signal to the disaffected Irish to rise up in arms. Several of the Leinster chieftains who had lately made their submissions, and bound themselves to the service of King Henry, openly disclaimed all their engagements. Even Donald Kavenagh, son of the late King Dermot, who had hitherto adhered to the English, even in their utmost difficulties, now declared against them, and asserted a title to the kingdom of Leinster ; while Roderick,

* THURLES is a pleasant, rich and populous town, situated on the river Suir, barony of Eliogurty, in the county of Tipperary, at the distance of 95 English miles from Dublin. From this town the eldest son of the Marquis of Ormond, takes the title of Earl. The ruins of O'Forgarty's castle, erected by that chieftain in the tenth century, and of the Carmelite friary built by the Butler family, on the east side of the river Suir, still remain as monuments of the great past in this opulent and spirited town. The country in which Thurles is embosomed, is rich, fertile and scenic. The magnificent and reverential ruins of the famous abbey of Holy Cross, are within three miles of Thurles. Boston, July 9, 1836.

on his part, was active in uniting the princes of Ulster, the native lords of Meath, and other chiefs, against their common enemy."

The triumph of O'Brien over the British arms, roused the fears of, and suggested the necessity of caution to Strongbow,—who, for security, retreated precipitately to Waterford. The oppressed Irish in that city, were now resolved to avenge the wrongs and insults offered to them by the English garrison, but the presence of Raymond le' Gross and Strongbow, with their combined forces, overawed them, and frustrated their design. O'Brien, prince of Thomond, flushed to the highest enthusiasm of ambition by his late victory, possessed himself of the city of Limerick, drove out the English garrison, and bade defiance to the British invaders. Strongbow, apprehensive of the growing power and continued conquests of O'Brien in the south of Ireland, despatched his brother-in-law, Raymond, with a force of six hundred men, to attack O'Brien in Limerick, and to reduce that garrison.

Although O'Brien made a brave defence, yet when Raymond, followed by his soldiers, waded through the Shannon, at a favourable moment, when the tide was unusually low, and furiously assaulted the city, they succeeded in compelling O'Brien to capitulate and agree to become the vassal of King Henry, by a solemn oath of allegiance, and the delivery of hostages.

"A new scene," writes Lawless, "now opens to the reader of Irish history, which at once excites the pity and contempt of every independent mind. It may conciliate the tender and mild feelings of humanity, but it must raise the indignation, and insult the pride of every independent Irishman. The Irish monarch, fatigued with the repeated efforts which he made to restore peace to his country, and depressed by the perfidy of his chieftains, determined at length to submit to Henry, under whom he might be able to hold his sovereignty, and to preserve his people against the afflicting calamities of war. It is almost impossible to look back to the conduct of the Irish monarch, on this occasion, without partaking of that sensibility which seemed to animate his royal bosom. Full of ardent and parental affection for his subjects, he preferred even the mortification of being the royal vassal of Henry, to making an unprofitable effort for the assertion of his sovereignty. He therefore determined on treating with the English monarch himself, and not through the medium of his generals. He sent forward his ambassadors to England, Catholicus, archbishop of Tuam, the abbot of St. Brandon, and Lawrence, chancellor to Roderick. The terms of accommodation were agreed upon between the two monarchs. Roderick bound himself by treaty to pay an annual tribute, namely, every tenth merchantable hide, and to acknowledge the king of England as his liege lord. The Irish monarch was, by the conditions of his treaty with Henry, to enjoy the uncontrolled administration of his kingdom; his royal rights were left inviolate; the English laws were to be confined, as we have said before, to the English pale.* The

* The PALE was the name given by King John, on the occasion of his visit to Ireland, in A. D. 1210, to those districts subject to the English power, which comprehended the present counties of Dublin, Meath, Louth, Wexford, Waterford, Cork, Kerry, Limerick and Tipperary.

submission of Roderick promised days of peace to Ireland; of strength and of glory to England."

Roderick was secured and allowed, by this treaty, all his regal authority as monarch of Ireland, over the provincial princes, and the terms of the compact which was ceremoniously ratified in a great council of prelates and princes, stipulated that his royal prerogative should be exercised in as full and free a manner as it was before he gave his adhesion and yielded homage to Henry. But several of the Irish chieftains paid little or no deference to Roderick after this, as they disregarded his royal authority,—because they looked upon him now as a dependent on the will and pleasure of a foreign king, and that the monarchical powers which he assumed were only nominal. Consequently several of them, by making a conditional submission to Henry, completely absolved them from the allegiance in which they had bound themselves to Roderick. Henry, now certain that he would soon possess full sovereignty over all Ireland, employed the ablest legislators in his realm to devise and draw up a code of laws for the good government of the English pale, to which laws the people were obliged to swear they would, in all cases, inviolably observe. He also ordered Strongbow to summon all the peers, prelates and abbots, to a parliament to be holden, with all convenient speed, in Dublin, which legislative convocations were to confirm all the enactments that were made at the parliament of Lismore, at which he had himself presided, shortly after his arrival in Ireland, A. D. 1172.* But as we before observed, the operation of the modes of the laws were to be confined exclusively to the English pale, and on no account to be enforced in the dominions of Roderick.

The splendid successes of Raymond in Munster, filled the breast of his implacable rival, Hervey Mountmorres, with envy and malice; so that he, writes Leland, "secretly despatched emissaries to Henry, by whom he made the most unfavourable representations of Raymond's conduct. They assured the king that this lord evidently aspired to an independent sovereignty in Ireland; that for this purpose he had practised all the arts of factious popularity, with too great success, and was no longer solicitous to conceal his disloyal schemes; that he had secured Limerick to himself, and in this and other cities had stationed garrisons devoted to his service, and sworn secretly to support his designs; that the infection had spread through the whole army, which waited but the command of Raymond to engage in any enterprize, however repugnant to the interest and authority of their prince." Meanwhile Raymond was pursuing a most brilliant career of conquest in Munster, which gained a facility from the unfortunate and deplorable feuds and quarrels which then estranged and divided the Irish princes. In the year 1176, Cormac, the son of Dermot McCarthy More, prince of Desmond, was so unfilial and unnatural as to rebel against his own father, to attack his palace, and immure him in a prison.

* It is mentioned by an English historian, that some of the statutes of the Parliament of Lismore, were quoted and adduced in an act passed in the second year of the reign of Richard III.

Dermod found means, however, to send a trusty messenger to Limerick to apprise Raymond of his situation, and to solicit his aid in restoring him to his liberty and principality. Raymond, proud of an invitation which promised to increase his fame and augment his fortune, quickly marched to the assistance of Dermod, the friend and tributary of his royal master, attacked the rebellious son, vanquished his whole force, and made a captive of himself, and then delivered him into the hands of his enraged father, who instantly sentenced him to be put to death. For this service, McCarthy More conferred on Raymond a large portion of the county of Kerry, which the latter assigned to his son Maurice, on his marriage with Catherine, the daughter of Milo de Cogan, which district is called to this day, *Clanmaurice*.^{*} Raymond returned to Limerick with rich spoils and an ample quantity of provisions, of which his garrison, in that city, stood in much need.

"But now," observes Dr. Leland, "in the midst of his success, he receives the alarming intelligence of the death of Earl Strongbow, who expired in Dublin after a tedious indisposition, occasioned by a mortification in his foot. The fickleness of the Irish, their real abhorrence of their despotic invaders, notwithstanding their pretended submissions, and their perhaps excusable precipitation in revolting and taking arms on any extraordinary emergency, were but too well known, and made it necessary for the English government to keep this event concealed, till their forces were collected from the distant quarters of the kingdom; and lest the secret should be discovered by any miscarriage of the letter which Basilica now sent to her husband, it was conceived in mysterious terms. She informed him that her great tooth, which had ached so long, was at last fallen out, and therefore entreated him to return to Dublin with all imaginable speed.

Raymond, who perfectly understood the meaning of this enigmatical expression, and the importance of a cautious and judicious procedure on an occasion so critical, returned instantly to Limerick, and there held a secret consultation with a few selected friends. It was readily agreed that the death of the chief governor, at a time when the next man in command was summoned into England, required an immediate attention to the peace and security of the English province; and that no troops could be spared from this first and necessary service. It had cost Raymond much pains and labour to gain the city of Limerick, and it was now peculiarly mortifying to find himself obliged to abandon this hardly acquired conquest. But the garrison could by no means be left behind. He therefore sent for Donald O'Brien; and with an affected ease and confidence acquainted him that, by his late submission, he was become one of the king's barons, and entitled to the confidence of his liege lord; and therefore, as a mark of distinction due to his

^{*} CLANMAURICE is the name of a barony in the county of Kerry, which derives its appellation from the circumstance mentioned in the text; its former Irish designation being *Lixraav*, or the land of the Luxcensis of Spain. Thomas Fitzmaurice, the direct and legitimate descendant of Maurice, the son of Raymond, was raised by George I. to the peerage, in the year 1722, by the title of Viscount Clanmaurice, and earl of Kerry, which dignities the family still enjoys.

exalted rank, he entrusted him with the custody of Limerick which might give him an occasion of approving his attachment, and meriting additional honours and rewards. The Irish chieftain received this proposal with a secret exultation, concealed under the appearance of the most profound humility, and dutiful allegiance. Raymond and his troops proceeded to evacuate the town; but scarcely had they passed over one end of the bridge, when the other was broken down; and they had the mortification to behold the city which they had taken such pains to fortify, and supply with stores of every kind, set on fire in four different quarters by order of O'Brien, who declared that Limerick should no longer be the nest of foreigners. We are told that when this transaction was reported to King Henry, possibly in order to possess him with an unfavourable opinion of Raymond, this prince, too generous and too wise to judge by the event, observed, that the first gaining of Limerick was a noble exploit, the recovery of it still nobler; but that the only act of wisdom was the abandoning their conquest in this manner."

Raymond, unable to retake the city which he had entrusted, in the manner related, to O'Brien, prince of Thomond, proceeded with all possible celerity to Dublin, where, on his arrival, in A. D. 1177, a council was convened, the members of which unanimously elected him viceroy of Ireland, in the room of his brother-in-law, Strongbow. The new viceroy commanded, as the first act of his government, that his noble predecessor's funeral should be marked by the splendour, pomp and magnificence due to the exalted military character, and distinguished station of the deceased. The gorgeous procession was composed of almost all the chiefs of the pale, the garrison and clergy of Dublin, and of several Irish toparchs. The funeral service, and other religious ceremonies, were performed by Archbishop O'Toole of Dublin. His remains were interred in a superb sepulchral monument in the cathedral of Christ's Church.*

"The manner of Strongbow's death is accurately described by the pen of superstitious vengeance; nor is it to be wondered at by the impartial reader of the sad variety of suffering inflicted upon Ireland by the arms of England, that the irritated Irish annalist should have given credit to the rumours that devoted this renowned English adventurer to a mysterious and miserable termination of his existence. The desolation and calamity with which unhappy Ire-

* "Amongst the monuments situated on or near the southern wall of the nave of this cathedral, (Christ Church) the attention of the antiquarian examiner is first attracted by the tomb ascribed to Richard, earl of Pembroke, surnamed STRONGBOW. This funeral memorial, as far as it is supposed to regard the earl, consists of the effigies of a knight, the legs crossed and the hands folded; the first position being probably intended to inform posterity that the deceased was engaged in the crusades, either in person, by proxy, or by vow. The knight is in mail; and on the left arm is a shield, with armorial bearings. The whole, as is usual with cross-legged figures, is rudely sculptured. On a tablet over the effigies is the following inscription:—'This ancyent monument of Rychard Strangbowe—called Comes—Strangveensis—lord of Chepsto and Ogny—the first and principal invader of Ireland, A. D. 1169. Qvi. obit. 1177. The monvment was broken by the fall of the roof and bodeye of Chryste's Chvrch, in 1562, and set up agayne at the charge of the Right Honourable Sir Henri Sydney, knight of the noble order of the garter, lord-president and depvty of Ireland, 1570.'"—BREWER.

land was visited—the degradation with which it was threatened, and the sad and affecting story which history was doomed to record, must have naturally called up those honest feelings of resentment which fill the bosoms of fallen pride and insulted honour. No wonder, then, that the persecuted Irish should look up to heaven for its vengeance on their cruel oppressors,—and that their tortured fancies should anticipate the mediation of that God whose altars were insulted, and whose temples were laid prostrate.” The English historians endeavoured to justify Strongbow and his rapacious followers, for plundering the churches and abbeys of Ireland, on the assumed and specious ground, that the Irish chieftains were, at that period, in the habit, when they dreaded the incursion of the Saxon enemy, to deposit their treasures, and other valuable effects, in these sacred edifices. But these futile and flimsy pretexts will find no credit with the inquiring and impartial historian, and instead of being deemed by him an extenuation of the impious aggression, he will calmly and deliberately pronounce them an aggravation of the despotism with which our native country was afflicted.

When King Henry was informed of the election, by the council in Dublin, of Raymond, as lord-vice-roy of Ireland, he became quite indignant at their choice; and in the fury of his anger, it is said, that he beat one or two of his attendants. The false representations made by Hervey Mountmorres against the bravest of his generals, now perverted and influenced his inflamed mind. The king immediately issued out a royal proclamation, despatched by a special envoy, annulling the appointment by the council, of Raymond, as lord deputy. After the envoy speedily followed William Fitzadelm, a noble relative of the king, bearing a commission authorizing him to act as viceroy of Ireland. This lord was joined in the patent by John de Courcy, Robert Fitzstephen, Milo de Cogan, and Cardinal Vivian, the pope’s legate. On their arrival, A. D. 1177, in Waterford, where Raymond, like a devoted subject, repaired to surrender his power to the new viceroy, the legate convened a meeting of all the clergy of Munster, at which he read the brief of Alexander, and the bull of Adrian IV., declaring and confirming Henry II. as the rightful king of Ireland. The legate imposed it as a sacred duty on all the bishops and priests of Ireland, to promulgate these papal documents as extensively as possible. Raymond, the chivalrous hero, whose magnanimity of soul was above envy or jealousy, felt mortified that his great and unexampled services rendered to Henry, were so ungratefully rewarded, resigned his command in the army, and retired to his castle at Tullaroan,* county of Kilkenny, to brood over his unmerited treatment and wrongs.

* TULLAROAN, or Courtstown, is situated within a few miles of the city of Kilkenny, on the northwestern margin of the county of Kilkenny. BREWER, in describing Tullaroan in his “*Beauties of Ireland*,” says, “Tullaroan is part of the extensive cantred of *Grace’s country*, the whole of which, for several centuries, belonged to the Grace family (the descendants of Raymond le Gross.) The district named after that family, consisted of a vast tract of land, comprehending, it is said, the whole barony of Cranagh, and extending northwards by the liberties of Kilkenny, and the river Nore, to the borders of the Queen’s county; and thence southwards, along to the borders of Tipperary, to the liberties of Callan;

Fitzadelm made a pompous, ostentatious and imposing parade of his vice-regal power while in Waterford; and thence, accompanied by his friends, Fitzstephen, Cogan and Fitzwalter, (the latter the ancestor of the present marquis of Ormond,*) and a magnificent and noble train of knights, set out on a tour of inspection, along the coast of Munster. In his stately progress he gave orders for the erection of new, and the repair of old fortresses. He made a triumphal entry into the city of Dublin, where he soon evinced the most haughty arrogance, and comported himself on every public occasion, more like a sovereign prince than the viceroy of Henry II. The first blow, however, that prostrated his lordly pride, was the positive refusal of Archbishop O'Toole to attend at his first levee,—that patriotic prelate offering his age and infirmity as his plea of apology. But that was not all the mortification which the noble-minded bishop's national spirit and obstinacy inflicted on the vanity of the viceroy,—for in despite of the power of the vatican, and of the legate's commands, the magnanimous and high-souled prelate declined issuing a circular pastoral letter to the clergy of his see, to publish and promulgate the bull of Pope Adrian, or the brief of Pope Alexander. Fitzadelm commenced his administration in Ireland, on the most despotic system, and his measures “seemed to be more directed against his predecessors in power, than to the extension of his royal master's interests. Giraldus Cambrensis says, that he was sensual and corrupt, rapacious and avaricious; and though not formidable from the terror of his arms, yet full of craft, of fraud and dissimulation.” Against his heroic predecessor,

forming a district between eleven and twelve miles in length, and betwixt five and six in breadth.” The Grace family forfeited these extensive estates, in consequence of their devoted attachment to the ungrateful Stuart family. At the battle of the Boyne, John Grace, Lord Courtstown, where he gallantly signalized his valour, commanded a regiment of foot which he had raised to assist James II. at his own expense. Prior to the disastrous battle of the Boyne, Lord Courtstown, writes Brewer, “was solicited with very flattering promises of royal favour, to throw the weight of his influence into the scale of King William's interest; and it is recorded that, in the warmth of the moment, he wrote on the back of a card this indignant reply to the overture, conveyed by an emissary of Duke Schomberg:—‘Tell your master I despise his offer; tell him that honour and conscience are dearer to a gentleman than all the wealth and titles a prince can bestow.’ This card chanced to be the six of hearts, which is, to this day, in the county of Kilkenny, frequently termed ‘*Grace's card*.’ Our historians say that Raymond le' Gross, the very Marshal Ney of Henry's forces in Ireland, died at Courtstown castle, in the year 1184. Giraldus Cambrensis calls him the ‘notable and chiefest pillar of Ireland.’” “Without him,” says an Irish antiquarian, “the soldiers were nothing, with him they were every thing.” We have not been able to ascertain the place of Raymond's sepulture; but it is probable his remains were interred in Courtstown church, in “Grace's chapel,” county of Kilkenny.

* The FITZWALTER family assumed the name of Butler, in consequence of their ancestor being butler to Henry II. The Butlers, for ages, were the persecutors and the patriots of Ireland,—they were “the glory and the shame” of the country. In our second volume we must, of necessity, say much more of the Butlers. This family were devoted adherents to the house of Lancaster, because Henry VI. could not be persuaded by calumnies or entreaties to remove the Earl of Ormond from the government of Ireland; and “this repeated favour,” observes Leland, “to the Earl of Ormond, seems to have laid the foundation of that lasting attachment which the family of Butler afterwards discovered to the house of Lancaster and its interests.”

Raymond le' Gross, he evinced the most malignant and envious spirit of persecution, offering him every insult and indignity. He compelled him to exchange his rich lands in Wexford, for uncultivated tracts in Kilkenny. The sons of Maurice Fitzgerald were also constrained by the despotism of vice-regal power, to give up the possession of their fertile domains, which "lay in a secure part of the country, for others more exposed to the incursions of the Irish."*

In the latter end of the year 1177, Fleming, the English commandant of the castle of Slane, "wantonly presuming," says Leland, "on his strength, had provoked the neighbouring chiefs by his depredations, who in revenge fell suddenly upon him with their united forces, slaughtered his followers without mercy or distinction; and pursuing the remains of his garrison even to the very walls of Dublin, were left at full liberty to demolish every fort which the English had erected in their territory. But far from repressing or revenging such incursions, Fitzadelm seems to have had neither dispositions nor abilities suited to a government, which was to be supported by a vigilant and a martial spirit. He came into the island with a jealousy of the original adventurers, which possibly had been infused into him by Henry, and which he had not temper to conceal. At his very first interview with Raymond, he is said to have looked with a malignant eye upon the numbers and gallant appearance of his train; and, turning to his followers, was weak enough to threaten that he should soon find means to quell their pride. The object of his administration was to enrich himself, not by the force and terror of his arms, but by the less hazardous and baser means of craft, fraud, and circumvention. To preserve peace with the Irish chiefs, he had recourse to affected courtesy and flattery, which they had discernment enough to discover and despise; and to his own countrymen, the apparent insincerity of his fairest professions, and the designs he manifested against their interest and properties, rendered him an object of detestation.

Walter Almain, his kinsman and creature, was stationed in Wexford, where he endeavoured to provide for his security by forming a connection with the Irish chieftain of O'Kinsellah, who is said to have prevailed on him by the force of bribes to demolish some considerable works lately erected for the defence of the English plantation. Thus, while all advantages were engrossed by the governor and his dependants, the perilous and laborious duties of defence were imposed on the original adventurers, a hardy race, untainted with the luxuries and debaucheries of Fitzadelm and his Normans;

* The FITZGERALD family are descended from Gerald, a Welsh baron, who, in the reign of Henry I. married Anne, daughter of Rees Gruffydth, prince of Wales, and widow of Robert Fitzstephen, constable of the castles of Abertiny and Pembroke. Prior to the lady's marriage with Fitzstephen, she was the mistress of King Henry I., by whom she had a son, named Henry, after his royal sire, the father to Miles and Robert Fitzhenry, who were among the first invaders of Ireland, as will be seen in the preceding pages. After her marriage with her second husband, Gerald, she gave birth to two sons, Maurice and William Fitzgerald, who accompanied their half brother, Fitzstephen, into Ireland. William was killed in battle in the county of Cork; but from Maurice, who married the daughter of Milo de Cogan, is descended the present Duke of Leinster. Boston, July 18, 1836.

but proud and irritable, and justly impatient to see the fruits of their labours seized by these new settlers. The strong and aggravated representations of their historian and panegyrist, Giraldus, plainly mark their discontent and indignation; and this unhappy division of the English, with the mutual jealousies and animosities of contending parties, could not fail to cast a shade of dishonour and reproach on the administration of Fitzadelm. The lords avowed their hatred; the soldiers were unpaid, and ill appointed; of consequence mutinous and discontented. The Irish natives crowded eagerly to a court which received them with the most flattering attention, and which is said not to have been inaccessible to bribes. Their claims and complaints were heard with favour by the chief governor, and always decided against his rivals, which served to increase their confidence, without lessening their disaffection.

The English lords who had all left their native lands from the hopes of valuable settlements and acquisitions in Ireland; and they who had not as yet received their rewards, were particularly displeased with Fitzadelm, and impatient of an administration unfriendly to the spirit of adventure. John de Courcy was the first to express his dissatisfaction. An extraordinary strength of body, and vigour of constitution, together with a violent and precipitate valour, had rendered him the admiration of his warlike and unpolished countrymen. His own utter insensibility to danger made him the readier to propose the most hazardous and desperate enterprizes; and his manners, which were rather those of a common soldier than a commander, gave him the easier access to the passions and prejudices of the soldiery. He laboured to inflame them against the governor; he represented the distress to which they were exposed by his avarice, which deprived them of pay, and the timidity of his government, which precluded them from supplying their necessities at the expense of their enemies; reminded them that King Henry had formerly granted him such lands of Ulster as he should acquire by the sword; and freely promised to share his fortune with those who preferred a gallant enterprize to a state of distressful indolence; and thus prevailed on a small body of the boldest and most adventurous, to attend him into the northern parts of Ireland, where the English arms had not as yet penetrated.

Armoric of St. Lawrence, a valiant knight, with whom he had been connected in the strictest bands of friendship, determined, on this occasion, to share the fortune of his old associate. Robert de la Poer, a young soldier who had lately been distinguished in the wars of Leinster, took the same part; and such leaders gave both strength and credit to the enterprize. The marriage of De Courcy with the daughter of Gothred, king of Man, freed him from the apprehensions of any opposition from this quarter, where the Irish had often found an effectual resource; and his own ignorant superstition served to confirm his hopes of a permanent and extensive conquest. He had discovered in the prophecies of Merlin, that the acquisition of Ulster was reserved for his valour; and his Irish adherents supplied him with another prophet, who declared that Downpatrick (the immediate object of his enterprize) was to be subdued by a stranger mounted on a white horse, with a shield charged

with painted birds. He accoutred himself according to this description, and marched to take possession of his destined conquest.

On the fourth day of his march he arrived at Downpatrick, the seat of Dunleavy, prince of Uladh, who, unprovided for defence against an invasion so unexpected, fled precipitately at the first appearance of hostilities. His people, thus exposed to the ravages of an indigent and rapacious enemy, were reduced to a state of helpless consternation, at the havoc of invaders whom they had not provoked, and from whom they thought themselves secured by solemn treaty. In this distress their prince had recourse to the interposition of Vivian, the legate, who, in his progress through the island, now chanced to reside at Downpatrick, and was witness of the present devastation. He instantly addressed himself to De Courcy, represented the injustice and cruelty of his present enterprise, reminded him of the treaty which the king of England had but just now concluded with the whole body of the Irish, in the person of their monarch, declared that the men of Ulster were ready to pay their quota of the stipulated tribute, and entreated him to spare a people who had provoked no resentment, and who, instead of being the object of hostilities, had a fair claim to protection.

Whatever deference De Courcy might affect for the person and character of Vivian, it plainly appeared that he paid no attention to his remonstrances; for his hostilities were continued. He fortified himself in Downpatrick, and seemed determined to maintain the possession he had acquired. The legate is said to have been so provoked at this injustice, and so affected by the sufferings of an unoffending people, that although the chief part of his commission was to prevail on the Irish to acknowledge the supremacy of King Henry, yet he now boldly advised Dunleavy to have recourse to arms, and to exert himself as became a brave prince, in order to rescue his territories from these rapacious invaders. His forces were collected; the neighbouring chiefs invited to his assistance; even Roderick was called upon to rise up against this outrageous violation of faith; and the cause was too important to be entirely neglected, even amidst all those private quarrels which still continued to weaken and distract the Irish princes. A tumultuary army, said to consist of ten thousand men, was collected, and marched under the command of the prince of Uladh, to dispossess these foreigners. De Courcy wisely determining not to abide a siege in a city scantily provided, and hastily fortified, marched out to meet the enemy with an affected contempt of their superiority; at the same time choosing such a situation as might render their numbers less effectual. The charge was furious, and the battle maintained for a considerable time with equal bravery on both sides; till at length, a disciplined, well armed, and well conducted body, proved superior to irregular, ill appointed, and undirected numbers. De Courcy, by the total overthrow of his opponents, was for the present left at full liberty to parcel out his lands, project and build his forts, and make all necessary provisions for the security of his conquest."

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ERRATA.

In page 71, for *idle* read *idol*,—in page 139, for *Deidre* read *Deirdre*,—in page 377, for *Firdaglas* read *Tirdaglas*. There are probably some more typographical errors that escaped my detection, for which I have to claim the kind indulgence of the readers of this History.

GEORGE PEPPER.



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